



ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The Amazon Conservation Team (ACT), founded in 1996, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving South American rainforests. The mission of ACT is to partner with indigenous and other local communities to protect tropical forest and strengthen traditional culture.

ACT has presence in Brazil, Colombia and Suriname. We have a unique niche among other environmental nonprofits working in the tropics: ACT protects the rainforest by working hand-in-hand with indigenous peoples and other local communities in the Amazon. Specifically, we seek to steadily increase the number of local communities in the Amazon who are able to monitor, sustainably manage and protect their traditional forestlands and significantly increase the area of Amazonian rainforest with improved protection.

ACT's strategic approach to conservation, focusing on sustainable land management and protection, secure and sustainable livelihoods, and strengthening community governance and culture, supports our vision for the Amazon and provides a clear, unified and long-term direction for how our organization operates.

ACT's headquarters is located in Arlington, Virginia. [See <http://www.amazonteam.org> for more]

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Over the past several years, ACT has invested extensively in integrating a systematic and rigorous approach to programmatic management into its organizational culture. This investment stems from our commitment to ongoing organizational learning to increase our impact potential. ACT has always been a high-impact organization; however, more could be done to have in place efficient mechanisms for systematizing, monitoring, documenting, and sharing our successes.

The organization has reached a point where establishing the structures and investing in human resources and technological capacities necessary to capture and maintain information about the organization's impact and past learnings is a priority in order to cope with the organizational growth projected for the next three years.

By advancing in our goal of having a rigorous approach to programmatic management—including staff training, technical guidance, and new technologies—we seek to do the following:

- Coordinate ACT's programmatic communication, entailing the unification of a common understanding of ACT's desired impacts across the organization, the use of a common language to share programmatic information, and the mechanisms necessary to facilitate systematization and communication.
- Improve ACT's strategic and adaptive program management, allowing us to test the effectiveness of our initiatives, better understand why/how our initiatives do or do not succeed, adapt ongoing initiatives to improve their effectiveness, and scale validated methodologies.
- Increase ACT's positive recognition in the conservation community through the sharing of our rigorously validated impacts and programmatic methodologies, facilitating the scaling of our methods beyond our organization.
- Appeal compellingly to rigorous donors by better demonstrating that ACT is a wise investment with a validated track record and the organizational capacity necessary to achieve our desired impacts.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

ACT is accepting proposals for a consultancy to design and conduct a gap analysis / assessment of the organizational needs required to bolster ACT's technical capacity and improve overall coordination for strategic programmatic decision-making. The assessment will inform what staff and systems will satisfy the diverse needs across the organization for unified programmatic planning, monitoring, and adaptive management by:

1. Informing the potential hiring of new staff member(s) or consultant in the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PMEL) area at the ACT-US office.
2. If applicable, identifying staffing needs at the ACT branch offices level in the PMEL and reporting area.

3. Identifying systems and tools for the PMEL and reporting area at the ACT-wide level.

PROJECT SCOPE

In alignment with the overall purpose of the consultancy and in close collaboration with ACT key staff, the Consultant will:

- Design and implement a gap analysis through interviews (approximately 20 staff) and other methods to assess the current state of staff and systems at the ACT-wide level to identify needs in the Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PMEL) area.
- Help to clarify how ACT branch offices envision the coordination from the ACT-US office and their expectations regarding PMEL and reporting functions.
- Outline the “ideal” profile(s), role(s) and responsibilities that need to be strengthened at the ACT-US level with respect to the PMEL in order to support the ACT branch offices in PMEL.
- Provide recommendations on whether tools and/or technology are needed to structure data collation, analysis and reporting at the ACT-wide level.

The summary above reflects the anticipated scope of this project. Additions/subtractions may occur during project implementation.

DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables are to be produced by the Consultant:

DELIVERABLES	TIME SCHEDULE
Work plan	To be determined
Outline of the gap assessment and interview tool inclusive of a questionnaire	To be determined
Draft assessment report including result of stakeholder interviews and recommendations	To be determined
Final assessment report including analysis of situation current state, recommendations and action plan	To be determined

PROJECT GUIDELINES

a. Qualifications:

- Experience working with current trends and practices in relevant discipline(s) and geographic regions. Knowledge of key conservation issues.
- At least ten years of conservation practice / planning experience, or equivalent experience in related fields. Experience working in the nonprofit and or philanthropic sector, preferably dealing with conservation and/or international development. Prior supervisory experience preferred.
- Experience in executing best practices for business analysis processes and functions (from an industry and strategic standpoint).
- Experience and demonstrated success in developing and implementing gap analyses, assessments or evaluations for environmental or conservation initiatives, projects or organizations.
- Experience in working with innovation platforms or processes and shared learning approaches.
- Experience in working in an international and/or inter-cultural environment.
- Familiarity with working in virtual teams across multiple time zones.
- A strong strategic, conceptual and analytical mindset.
- Excellent interpersonal skills to effectively liaise with key stakeholders.
- Strong oral and written communication skills with a proficiency in English. Working knowledge of spoken and written Spanish and Portuguese is a strong competitive advantage.

- b. Time Requirement:** Schedule is flexible as agreed upon by supervisor and includes working remotely. The functional requirements of the contract may vary in length from month to month dependent upon the scope of the project.

RFP RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

RFP responses should be as succinct as possible while providing an accurate picture of the consultant's ability to meet the needs of ACT in a thorough, accurate, responsive and cost-effective manner. Each proposal should include the following information:

- a. **Background Information:** Updated resume and cover letter.
- b. **Approach to Meeting the Scope of Services:** Information regarding the consultant's approach to meeting project requirements in the above scope of services.
- c. **Timeline:** Include proposed timeline for completion of the project.
- d. **Cost Estimate:** Please provide the total "all-inclusive" proposed cost and an itemized budget by specific activity, including descriptions, estimated third-party and reimbursable expenses, etc.
- e. **Relevant Experience and References:** Provide 3-5 samples indicating relevant work experience (web links or URLs are sufficient). In addition, please provide three reference clients that are similar in size and scope to ACT. Include contact person, e-mail and phone number.
- f. **Other Requirements:**
 - If the execution of work to be performed requires the hiring of subcontractors, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Subcontractors must be identified (name, address and EIN if applicable), and the work they will perform must be defined. ACT will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors. However, ACT retains the right to refuse any subcontractors selected by the bidder.
 - Describe any potential conflicts of interest in relation to the subject matter for this project.
 - Include any other information not specifically requested here that may be of use to ACT in the evaluating process.

SELECTION CRITERIA

ACT will award the contract in the manner that will obtain the highest quality of service at the most competitive price. Proposals will be evaluated applying, but without limitation to, the following criteria:

- Overall approach to meeting the scope of services outlined in this RFP
- Completeness of the proposal with respect to submission of this RFP and documentation
- Experience in providing similar services to nonprofits or successfully completed similar projects
- Itemized costs for all services provided, including expenses
- Terms and conditions for project completion, including timeline and contract provisions
- Quality and applicability of references
- Any other factors ACT deems appropriate in its decision

After initial proposals are reviewed, ACT will select two finalists. Selected candidates will be invited to present their proposals via videoconference or in person on an agreed-upon date.

Acceptance of a proposal will be based on the total package of services offered by the finalists. ACT reserves the right to request additional technical and pricing information during the evaluation period.

ACT reserves the right to accept/reject any and/or all proposals, in whole or in part, as submitted, with or without negotiations, received as a result of this RFP, or to negotiate separately with any other consultants in any manner necessary to serve the best interests of the organization. The consultant's proposal should state whether its costs would vary if ACT exercises this right. ACT is not obligated to accept the proposal having the lowest cost. Consultants not selected will not be entitled to a debriefing.

Consultants submitting proposals acknowledge that ACT may be considering, and may in the future consider, business ideas, concepts and plans similar to or the same as those contained in the proposals. Nothing in a consultant's proposal shall prevent ACT from pursuing

any such ideas, concepts or plans, either internally or through third parties. Technical information submitted will not be treated as confidential, unless otherwise indicated in the proposal. Information related to pricing will not be disclosed to other firms bidding on this project, or any person or organization not affiliated with ACT.

Consultants may be asked to negotiate with ACT in developing a potential final contract. If ACT determines that further negotiation is in the best interest of the organization, ACT may advise one or more consultants how such negotiations shall be conducted and, upon completion of such negotiation, may ask one or more consultants to submit a best and final offer for consideration. ACT may then select a consultant based on this written proposal with or without further negotiation.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals are due no later than **5:00 pm ET on March 4, 2022**, and should be sent electronically to the ACT Sr. Director of Finance and Operations, Karla Lara-Otero, at info@amazonteam.org. A confirmation-of-receipt email will be sent within 24 hours of receipt. Applicants should note the following:

- All proposal pages are to be numbered sequentially.
- No paper bid submittals will be accepted.
- The e-mail should be titled **Request for Proposal (RFP) - Programmatic and PMEL Gap Analysis** to ensure that it won't be lost in an email stream.
- ACT's email will allow receipt of documents of up to 10 megabytes in size.

ACT reserves the right not to consider proposals received after the submission deadline. ACT reserves the right to revise this RFP at any time prior to the deadline for receiving proposals, or to cancel this RFP, in whole or in part, at any time before signing a contract. Issuance of this RFP creates no obligation on the part of ACT to award a contract.

TIMELINE

DESCRIPTION	TIME SCHEDULE
RFP release date	February 11, 2022
Proposal due date	March 18, 2022 at 5:00 pm ET
Finalist(s) notification <i>All other candidates will be notified once the successful applicant is selected</i>	March 23, 2022
Presentation/Interview (in-person or videoconference)	March 28 - 31, 2022
Consultancy selection	April 1, 2022
Projected start of the project: optimally no later than	May 2, 2022
Target completion of the project: optimally no later than	September 30, 2022

ACT reserves the right to revise these deadlines.

QUESTIONS

For questions regarding this RFP, applicants may submit written inquiries to info@amazonteam.org on or before **March 17, 2022 at 5:00 pm ET**. Failure to request clarification of any inadequacy, omission, or conflict will not relieve the consultant of responsibilities under any subsequent contract. While ACT will make every effort to respond to applicant inquiries, it is the responsibility of the interested applicants to assure they receive responses to questions if any are issued.

CONTRACT TERMS

The consultant shall not commence any billable work or provide any goods or services until both the consultant and ACT have signed a contract. Payment terms are negotiable and will be effective upon the signing of a contract by both parties. However, the contract shall state that ACT will make final payment for services after COMPLETE delivery to the satisfaction of the organization. In addition, the final contract shall specifically outline the obligations of both parties, scope, timeline, budget, including a finalized list of goods and services to be provided by the consultant, and other necessary items.

DISCLAIMERS

- **Consultant Responsibility to Provide Full Response:** It is the consultant's responsibility to respond in a manner that does not require interpretation or clarification by ACT. The consultant is to provide all requested materials, forms and information. The consultant is to ensure the materials submitted properly and accurately reflects the consultant's offering. During the evaluation process, ACT will rely upon the submitted materials and shall not accept materials from the consultant after the RFP deadline; this does not limit ACT's right to consider additional information, such as references that are not provided by the consultant, but are known to ACT, or past ACT experience with the consultant, or to seek clarifications as needed.
- **Conflict of Interest:** A consultant filing a proposal thereby certifies that the proposal is made in good faith, without fraud, collusion or connection of any kind with any other consultant, and that the consultant is competing solely on its own behalf without connection with or obligation to any undisclosed person or firm.
- **Changes or Corrections to Proposals Submitted:** Prior to the submittal due date, a consultant may change its proposal. No changes are allowed after the closing date and time. ACT may waive immaterial defects and minor irregularities in any submitted proposal.
- **Errors in Proposal:** Consultant are responsible for errors and omissions in their proposals. No error or omission shall diminish the consultant's obligations to ACT.
- **Cost of Preparing Proposals:** All costs directly or indirectly related to the preparation of a response to this RFP, any oral presentations required supplementing and/or clarifying a proposal, and/or reasonable demonstrations that may be required by ACT shall be the sole responsibility of each consultant.
- **Rejection of Proposals:** ACT reserves the right to reject any and all proposals with no penalty.

GENERAL CONDITIONS AND NOTICE TO CONSULTANTS

- This is an open and competitive process.
- ACT is a tax-exempt organization; prices quoted shall not include taxes.
- No financial claim for any payment whatsoever shall be brought against ACT for any contract delays.