

RFP International Rivers' Financial Management
November, 2021

PROPOSALS DUE: December 6, 2021

SUBMIT TO: Darryl Knudsen, Executive Director
dknudsen@internationalrivers.org

Background and introduction

Over the past five years, we have seen quite a bit of churn in our financial management leadership. At the same time, we have been struggling to manage decreasing unrestricted fund revenues and cover our shared costs and activities that rely on unrestricted funds. Both these challenges mean that our current budget planning and financial reporting processes are inadequate to our needs. Our current finance staff need additional support, possible training, and/or outsourced services to improve our internal tracking, reporting, forecasting, and strategic budgeting processes.

For context, International Rivers has a roughly \$3M budget for 2021. For our size, we are an international organization with complex legal entity structures and finances. Our headquarters are in Oakland, CA, and we have separate registered entities in South Africa, India, Thailand, and Brazil with staff spread across 9 countries. Our current Head of Finance is based in Mumbai, and our Executive Director is based in Oakland, California. We have three additional staff working on finances, who are based in Thailand, South Africa, and California; they work primarily on bookkeeping, accounts payable, payroll, and ad-hoc financials for complex grant management. Our Head of Finance has trained them and documented current processes and accounting procedures. Our fiscal year is a calendar year. We are in our annual planning process for work plans and budget. We plan to deliver a budget for FY2022 to the Board of Directors for approval at our early December 2021 meeting.

We have worked hard to bring our accounting and financial management back in-house. About 4-5 years ago our long-time Finance Director stepped down. The former ED chose to outsource our financial management to an outside firm. This did not work well for us and was very expensive. We are up-to-date on our audits and Form 990s. Our 2020 audit has concluded. We use the MIP financial software. Importantly, we have a good cash position; however, we are unable to use all of this money because of a large, negative unrestricted funds imbalance from prior years that we need to figure out how to unwind.

Below is an overview of our needs. We welcome your expertise on how to sequence these items to be most efficient and effective, including proposals for modified dates for deliverables.

Overview of project goals and scope of services (see details for each section below):

1. Short-term/ interim management (3-6 months), including preparation of FY2022 budget and FY2021 year-end accounting and reporting
2. Financial reporting, tracking, and planning (probable General Ledger update)
3. Recommend and implement further process improvements
4. Investigation and forensics

1. Short-term/ interim management (3-6 months)

- A. Assume overall management of bookkeeping and accounting, reporting in to the Executive Director
- B. Oversee financial work (primarily bookkeeping and Accounts Payable) of three part-time staff in diverse locations (California, South Africa, Thailand)
- C. Ensure our accounts are up-to-date in preparation for 2021 audit
- D. Close monthly with statement of financial position, statement of activities and statement of cash flows reports
- E. Provide ad-hoc reporting for grant applications and management
- F. Manage 2022 budget building process in close cooperation with the organization's Management Team and Board Finance Committee

2. Financial reporting, tracking, and planning

- A. Determine reporting requirements of management and Board
- B. Evaluate current obstacles to generation of regular, timely, and useful financial reports
- C. Develop regular reports (point 1.E. above) on an interim basis
- D. Probable General Ledger update
- E. Outline current processes for 1) bookkeeping both within and outside MIP, and 2) org-wide budget building and tracking, 3) regional and grant budget-building and tracking
- F. Recommend optimized resourcing for financial management at IR. This should include staff, division of responsibilities, and could blend internal staff with external support.
- G. Assistance with restricted and unrestricted fund tracking

Recommend and implement further process improvements

- A. Outline current processes for 1) bookkeeping both within and outside MIP and 2) org-wide budget building and tracking, 3) regional and grant budget-building and tracking
- B. Make recommendations to improve financial processes, resources, and practices, including reporting, budgeting, controls and planning
- C. Implement project-related improvements

- D. Recommend optimized long-term resourcing for financial management at IR to implement these improvements. This should include staff, division of responsibilities, and could blend internal staff with external support.

Investigation and forensics

- A. Investigation and forensics on past unrestricted fund imbalance that remains on our books and is currently covered by an unrestricted Board Reserve. We still are investigating the origins of this deficit and how to move this off of our books (re-assigning expenses, conversations with past funders to approve re-assigning of expenses, returning funds, or other solutions). This investigation may happen in parallel with the FY2022 budget-building process.

Please submit a proposal for the above needs by December 6, 2021 in which you provide the elements below:

Anticipated selection schedule

1. RFP released by Nov. 22, 2021
2. Proposals due Dec. 6, 2021
3. Interviews on a rolling basis
4. Selection communicated by December 15

Time and place of submission of proposals

Please submit proposals as a Word Document or Power Point or both via email to Darryl Knudsen, Executive Director, at the following email addresses:

dknudsen@internationalrivers.org

Timeline for proposed project elements

We prefer predictable timing to aggressive timing. If the deadlines do not seem feasible, please communicate in your proposal what IS feasible.

Project goal	Preferred timing
Interim management, including.. Deliver 2022 budget	START As soon as possible Final budget by Jan. 14 to be discussed and voted on at End. Jan. Board meeting
Investigation and forensics	TBD
Initial improvements to financial reporting	TBD and ASAP
Reporting recommendations & initial implementation	TBD

Recommend and begin implementation of further process improvements	TBD
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1. Elements of proposal

A. For each project goal:

- a. Scope and methodology
- b. Estimated timing
- c. Cost estimate
- d. Level of confidence/ experience in delivering

B. Overview of your or your firm's relevant background and experience

- a. Speak to each project goal
- b. List experience in non-profit accounting and finance
- c. Indicate familiarity with US GAAP & whether you have a CPA
- d. Indicate familiarity with operations & controls

C. Reference list to be contacted

D. Your willingness or preference to work on select elements of this RFP

2. Evaluation criteria

- A. Technical capability for each goal (we may unbundle them)
- B. Speed
- C. Cost
- D. Ability to work remotely to accommodate disparate timezones
- E. Cross-cultural awareness and communications
- F. Ability to proactively drive the work with colleagues who are facing competing priorities

3. Possible roadblocks

- A. Poor documentation of existing budget building process
- B. Our general ledger and budget line items do not line up
- C. Our accounting related information is housed on MIP, which may be unfamiliar to you
- D. Much of our other financial management information is housed on spreadsheets
- E. Current head of Finance likely unavailable in November 2021

4. Budget

Project goal	Budget
Interim management	Market rate

Reporting recommendations & implementation	Up to \$20k
Recommend and implement further process improvements	
Recommendations on optimized financial management resourcing (staff & otherwise)	
Investigation and forensics	Up to \$5k