

# Request For Proposal – Redwood Region RISE: Equity Resource Specialist

**Submission Deadline:** Friday, October 11, 2024, 11:59 p.m.

Questions, notices of intent to apply, and submission may be submitted via email to:

**Contact Name:** North Edge; Attn: Susan Seaman; 707 K Street, Eureka, CA 95501;  
susan@northedgefinancing.org; (707) 798-6132 ext. 212

North Edge is seeking a Facilitator: Equity Resource Specialist to provide backbone support to the Redwood Region RISE Equity Council. The Equity Resource Specialist will be required to uphold the core principles outlined in the RRRISE Partnership Agreement Letter (Appendix A).

Roles and responsibilities include:

- 1) Meeting facilitation quarterly with the ability to have conversations in between meetings and have additional meetings as needed (including but not limited to scheduling, securing a location, technical assistance, and note-taking);
- 2) Agenda building (ensuring discussions inform Equity Council’s objectives);
- 3) Regular and consistent communication with Equity Council Members, the Collaborative at large, and the Convening Team;
- 4) Reporting (written and verbal report-outs to the Equity Council, Collaborative at large, and the Convening Team);
- 5) Onboarding support for new Members;
- 6) Collaboration with Redwood Region RISE’s governing bodies and Sector Investment Coordinators;
- 7) Experience with priority communities;
- 8) Advocating for priority communities to be in leadership of projects and opportunities for additional co-leading and collaboration.

This work will be managed by the California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP), a community-driven research center dedicated to improving the lives of rural people in California. CCRP is committed to improving the health and environment of rural people through their research and recommendations that inform decisions and policies. CCRP is the regional convener for the Redwood Region as part of California Jobs First “Regional Investment Initiative”.

## Project Background

The California Jobs First (formerly Community Economic Resilience Fund [CERF]) initiative is a grant program created by state legislation SB162 to promote a sustainable and equitable recovery from the economic distress of COVID-19. California Jobs First will support the development of new plans and strategies to diversify local economies; create high quality, broadly accessible, thriving-wage jobs; and support the transition to a carbon-neutral economy.

At present the fund has four components:

1. **Planning Phase**—Facilitated by a neutral convener (CCRP), the planning phase awarded regions \$5 million to establish regional collaboratives of diverse partners called High Road Transition Collaboratives and engage them in creating a Regional Roadmap which charts the region’s course towards achieving California Jobs First objectives and priorities for the implementation phase. (Concludes September 30, 2024)
2. **Catalyst Program**—\$14 million noncompetitive funding opportunity for the Region to engage in pre-development activities and invest in key sectors. (Concludes September 30, 2026)
3. **Implementation Funding**—\$150 million (at the time of writing) to be released over three fiscal years starting in FY 2024/2025. Competitive across the state’s 13 regions, Implementation grants provide funding for shovel-ready projects that advance California Jobs First goals and are aligned with regional strategies.
4. **Tribal Funding Opportunity**—A \$15 million (at the time of writing) competitive funding opportunity for California’s federally recognized Tribes. There is also an opportunity for a Tribal-serving organization to become the fund’s intermediary.

The California Center for Rural Policy is the Convener for the Redwood Region (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy), and North Edge is the fiscal agent. Our region’s initiative includes Tribal Lands and Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties. During the Implementation Phase, the State will fund projects that are supported by the California Jobs First Collaborative. Criteria to evaluate proposed projects includes support from the community, creation of high-quality jobs with pathways for underserved and incumbent workers, demonstration of labor standards, and alignment with climate goals.

## Sector Development

As the initiative transitions from the planning phase to its Catalyst Program, Sector Investment Coordinators will be contracted to develop projects in the four industry sectors. The Equity Resource Specialist will help connect the Equity Council to this work, and assist them in establishing best practices when working with early-stage projects centering equity.

The following four key sectors identified by Redwood Region RISE during the Planning Phase as critically important to driving equitable and sustainable economic development in the region are:

- 1) Arts, Culture, and Tourism
- 2) Health and Caregiving
- 3) Renewable and Resilient Energy
- 4) Working Lands and Blue Economy

Commonly identified priorities include the following Cross-Cutting sectors:

- Broadband
- Entrepreneurship
- Food Access & Security
- Housing
- Transportation
- Workforce Development

## Catalyst Fund Development

During the Planning Phase, the state introduced Catalyst funding to ensure the Regional Investment Initiative effects systemic changes in regional economies. Catalyst funds will support each region's Collaborative to invest \$9 million in pre-development activities, enabling regions to take projects from exploratory and last-mile to ready-to-go projects that can access local, state, and federal government funds, as well as private and philanthropic investments. The projects that will ultimately be realized through the Catalyst Program will have similar if not the same criteria as Implementation Funding.

## Required Facilitation Skills

Organizations and individuals across the region have engaged in the planning process and helped develop strategies and identify collaborations and partnerships that can advance those strategies. The Resource Specialist is tasked with facilitating the Equity Council in ensuring that equity is at the forefront throughout the process. This includes meeting facilitation, agenda-building, communication, reporting, onboarding, and collaboration with our region's governing bodies, other coordinators, and the Convening Team.

The Resource Specialist will support the following:

- Encourage priority communities' participation;
- Ensure equity throughout the collaborative and also hold equity in the process;
- Empower diverse perspectives, cultures, backgrounds, languages, and abilities in economic development efforts;
- Honor the contributions from diverse individuals;
- Manage the dynamics of unequal power and influence in groups;
- Demonstrate experience in managing complex group dynamics;
- Design the flow of meetings and support the groups to achieve desired outcomes;
- Assist in distilling complex ideas/topics/themes;
- Assist with defining decision-making processes;
- Manage/coordinate the exchange of information/ideas among and between groups;
- Meetings, including hybrid and in-person;
- Coordinate with the Convening Team;
- Provide written and verbal progress reports.

## Scope of Work

The Equity Resource Specialist will provide comprehensive support to the Equity Council, Collaborative, and Convening Team to ensure effective facilitation, communication, and advocacy. This role involves meeting management, agenda development, regular communication, reporting, onboarding, and collaboration with governing bodies and Sector Investment Coordinators. The Equity Resource

Specialist will also focus on engaging priority communities and advocating for their participation and leadership.

### 1. Meeting Facilitation and Support

- **Service:** Facilitate quarterly meetings and provide ongoing support between meetings. This includes scheduling, securing a location, offering technical assistance, and taking detailed notes to ensure productive and well-documented discussions.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Meeting agendas and schedules.
  - Meeting notes and action items.
  - Technical support documentation.

### 2. Agenda Building

- **Service:** Develop meeting agendas that align with the Equity Council's broader objectives and ensure that discussions are relevant and actionable.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Agendas for all meetings.
  - Summary of discussions and how they align with broader objectives.

### 3. Regular Communication

- **Service:** Maintain consistent and proactive communication with Equity Council members, the Collaborative, and the Convening Team to ensure alignment and address any issues promptly.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Regular updates and correspondence.
  - Communication logs and summaries.

### 4. Quarterly Reporting

- **Service:** Prepare and deliver written and verbal reports to the Equity Council, Collaborative, and Convening Team, providing updates on progress, challenges, and achievements.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Written reports (e.g., progress reports, issue briefs).
  - Verbal presentations and briefings.

## 5. Onboarding Support

- **Service:** Assist in the onboarding of new Equity Council members, including orientation and integration into the group's activities and objectives.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Onboarding materials and orientation plans.
  - Records of onboarding activities and feedback.

## 6. Collaboration with Governing Bodies and Sector Coordinators

- **Service:** Work collaboratively with Redwood Region RISE's governing bodies and Sector Investment Coordinators to support project goals and ensure alignment with equity objectives.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Collaboration meeting notes and action items.
  - Joint project plans and updates.

## 7. Experience with Priority Communities

- **Service:** Leverage experience with priority communities to ensure their needs and perspectives are integrated into the initiative's strategies and activities.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Reports on engagement with priority communities.
  - Recommendations for involving priority communities in leadership roles.

## 8. Advocacy for Priority Communities

- **Service:** Advocate for the inclusion of priority communities in leadership positions and co-leading opportunities within projects and initiatives.
- **Deliverables:**
  - Advocacy plans and strategies.
  - Documentation of advocacy outcomes and impact.

## Deliverables

1. **Meeting Agendas and Schedules**
  - Comprehensive agendas for all scheduled meetings.
  - Detailed meeting schedules and reminders.
2. **Meeting Notes and Action Items**

- Clear and actionable notes from each meeting.
- List of action items and follow-up tasks.
- 3. **Communication Logs**
  - Records of all regular communications with Equity Council members, the Collaborative, and the Convening Team.
- 4. **Written Reports**
  - Progress reports, issue briefs, and other relevant written documents for community partners..
- 5. **Onboarding Materials**
  - Orientation guides, onboarding checklists, and records of training sessions for new members.
- 6. **Collaboration Documentation**
  - Meeting notes, project plans, and updates related to collaboration with governing bodies and sector coordinators.
- 7. **Engagement Reports**
  - Documentation of engagement with priority communities and strategies for their inclusion.
- 8. **Advocacy Documentation**
  - Records of advocacy efforts, including strategies, plans, and outcomes related to priority communities.

### **Background on Equity Council**

Referencing the Equity Charter, the Equity Resource Specialist will support Equity Council on their vision and purpose which is to provide oversight on community outreach and engagement in the Redwood Coast Region (Tribal Lands, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino Counties) to ensure diverse voices and perspectives are included in the planning, catalyst, and implementation process and that the decision-making processes are equitable.

The above scope of work and deliverables are to ensure Equity Council's goals are met which are to:

1. Advise on the needs, priorities, concerns, and barriers for priority communities throughout the California Jobs First Phases.
2. Make recommendations on who to consult within the region.
3. Honor and respect the contributions and perspectives from all participants.
4. Advocate for priority communities.

5. Make recommendations to Convening Team and Collaborative for improving efforts to include priority communities.
6. Help encourage community members, especially priority communities, to participate.
7. Advise and lead an inclusive decision-making process in the California Jobs First Phases that will be used by the Collaborative.

*Note: The period of performance for this grant will be October 2024- September 30, 2026.*

## Estimated Timeline

Proposal Due Date	Friday, October 11, 2024, 11:59 p.m.
Award Notification	Friday, October 18, 2024, 5:00 p.m.
Initial Meeting	October 21-25, 2024
Contract Ends	September 30, 2026

The Equity Council Resource Specialist will be asked to provide monthly reports and invoices.

## Support & Resources

CCRP will provide the Equity Resource Specialist with contact information for the governing bodies and other partners, as well as orientation and written guidance on RRRISE Processes and Procedures.

## Submission

### Proposal Requirements

To be considered for the Equity Resource Specialist role, proposals must include the following:

1. **Contact Sheet:** Include the applicant's name, primary contact name, phone number, and email.



2. **Evaluation Questions:** Please answer the following questions. Answers should be limited to a brief paragraph each.
  - a. Equity and Inclusion: Explain the applicant's philosophies on equity and inclusion and give an example of how these values have been practiced in applicant's work.
  - b. Regionalism and Collaboration: Explain the applicant's philosophies on regionalism and collaboration and give an example of how these values have been practiced in applicant's work.
  - c. Work Plan: Briefly describe how the applicant would support the Equity Council in reaching their desired objectives over the duration of the grant.
  
3. **Quality of Work Samples and References:** Provide a sample of similar projects and the contact for the sample (if applicable).
  
4. **Budget Form:** Fill out the attached budget form (Appendix B). **North Edge has up to \$110,000 available for the Equity Resource Specialist's services.** The contracts will be based on cost reimbursement for services provided. Please note that services to the Equity Council **must** extend through September 2026.

## Proposal format

Please use font sizes no smaller than 10 pt. Proposals should be submitted as a PDF in one document and no longer than 3-5 pages. If for any reason a proposal needs multiple documents, these documents should be compiled into a zip folder, labeled appropriately (i.e., "Exhibit [#] [Document Title]"), and referenced as such in the primary document.

North Edge will not pay any costs associated with the preparation, submittal, or presentation of any proposal. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

## Submission Date

Proposals should be submitted to North Edge by **October 11th, 11:59 p.m.** and should

be addressed to Susan Seaman via email to [susan@northedgefinancing.org](mailto:susan@northedgefinancing.org) and include "Equity Resource Specialist" in the subject line.

## Evaluation & Award

### Qualifications

The Equity Resource Specialist should possess the following qualifications:

1. **Expertise:** The applicant should have experience with centering equity in economic development efforts.
2. **Experience:** The applicant should have a proven track record reflecting their work and commitment to California Jobs First principles and objectives.
3. **Regional Knowledge:** The applicant should have knowledge of the region and be familiar with our region's economy, key industries, labor force characteristics, climate resilience, and public health issues that impact communities' well-being.
4. **Resources:** The applicant should have the necessary resources to complete the work on time.
5. **Feasibility:** The proposed services can be carried out in the allotted time.

### Selection Process

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and experience of the applicant (40 possible points).
2. Responses to evaluation questions (30 possible points).
3. Quality of work samples and references (30 possible points).

The California Jobs First Convening Team will review proposals submitted and select the Equity Resource Specialist based on the evaluation criteria.

### Proposal Award Expectations

North Edge shall award the contract to the proposal that best accommodates the contractual requirements. North Edge reserves the right to award any contracts

prior to the proposal deadline stated within the “Estimated Timeline” or prior to receipt of all proposals; award the contracts to more than one bidder; and refuse any proposals or contracts.

The awardee will be hired by North Edge as an independent contractor. Upon accepting the award, the following must be provided to complete the contract:

- The Scope of Work;
- A business license OR a copy of your Articles of Incorporation or Organization (for LLCs or Inc.s);
- A link to your website OR your current CV for the CEO/AO that lists current work with your business; and
- A budget by general cost category to accompany the bid.

## Appendix A – Partnership Agreement Letter

### **Redwood Region RISE California Jobs First (Formerly CERF) Partnership Agreement Letter**

California Jobs First (formerly The Community Economic Resilience Fund [CERF]) brings us together to build an equitable and sustainable economy across the rural Redwood Coast Region—the Redwood Region RISE (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy). We seek to create opportunities for all communities across our Region to thrive by addressing historical inequities in our economy as we work towards a carbon-neutral future.

I have reviewed the Governance Structure for the Collaborative for the Redwood Region RISE. I understand that the governance and participation model may change as the process evolves and am committed to moving the process forward, and supporting the collective leadership model of the Collaborative.

**This Letter outlines the various sub-committees, their commitments, and compensation included for participation. I agree to:**

- Participate in and help expand collaborative partnerships across the region;
- Articulate regional concerns, priorities and solutions (current and new);
- Model and promote inclusive and equitable approaches to regional work;
- Refine project criteria based on regional priorities for the Implementation Phase; and,
- Move projects forward for funding consideration.

<b>Core Principles Guiding Process</b>	<b>Core Principles Guiding Regional Results</b>
Equitable Inclusion of Priority Partners	Equitable, Inclusive Economic Development
Respect for Diverse Perspectives	Collaborative Worker–Employer Industry Leadership
Cooperation and Collaboration	Broadly Accessible High–Quality Jobs
Transparency and Accountability	Economic Competitiveness and Resilience
Adherence to HRTC Decision Model	Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience

**This Partnership Agreement Letter is an agreement between all parties who sign it to uphold the core principles as we work together.**

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Signed/Dated

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Full Name of Individual, Affiliation (if applicable)

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Email Address

