

Request For Proposal: RRRISE Equity and Project Development Expert

Submission Deadline: Thursday, July 18, 2024

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

Contact Name: The California Center for Rural Policy

Attn: Alisha Hammer

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Arcata, CA 95521

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Phone: 707-826-3405

The California Center for Rural Policy (CCRP) is seeking an Equity and Project Development Expert to support Redwood Coast Regional organizations in developing projects that benefit disinvested communities, create thriving wage opportunities, and support a resilient and sustainable economy in the region. The entity selected for this role will possess strong networks and knowledge of the region-Tribal Lands and Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino counties. The expert will be tasked with helping early-stage project proponents move through the project development process, center California Jobs First values in their project design, and better connect with resources available within and outside of the Redwood Region RISE Collaborative. The expert will be required to uphold the core principles outlined in the RRRISE Partnership Agreement Letter, and deliver on work plan goals in the timeline stipulated by the California Jobs First Planning Phase grant.

The California Center for Rural Policy is a community-driven research center dedicated to improving the lives of rural people in California. We are committed to improving the health and environment of rural people through our research with the goal of making recommendations that inform decisions and policies. CCRP is the convener for the Redwood Coast Region's California Jobs First initiative, formerly known as CERF. Redwood Region Resilient Inclusive and Sustainable Economy (RRRISE) is the local name of the initiative.

Project Background

The California Jobs First (formerly Community Economic Resilience Fund) initiative is a \$600 million 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 awards regions \$5 million to establish regional collaboratives of diverse partners called High Road Transition Collaboratives and engage them in creating a Regional Road Map which charts the region's course towards achieving California Jobs First objectives and priorities for the implementation phase.
2. Catalyst Fund—\$14 million noncompetitive funding opportunity for the Region to engage in pre-development activities and invest in key sectors.

3. Implementation Funding—\$150 million (at the time of writing) to be released over three fiscal years starting in FY '24/25. 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 \$25 million 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 (CCRP) is the Convener for the Redwood Coast Region. Our Region's initiative is called Redwood Region RISE (Resilient Inclusive Sustainable Economy), and includes Tribal Lands and Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, and Mendocino counties. The Arcata Economic Development Corporation (AEDC) is the fiscal agent and North Coast Opportunities (NCO) is the Outreach & Community Engagement lead. True North Organizing Network is responsible for outreach and engagement in Del Norte County. In 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.

Technical Assistance for Project Development

Four key sector groupings have been identified by Redwood Region RISE as critically important to driving equitable and sustainable economic development in the region:

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

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 Expert is tasked with providing early stage technical support to projects that center disinvested communities in their project benefits and design teams.

As the initiative transitions from the planning phase to its Catalyst program, industry coordinators will be recruited to develop projects in the four priority sectors. The Expert will help initiate this work and establish best practices when working with early stage projects centering equity.

Purpose: California Jobs First aims to shift traditional economic development practice to center the voices and priorities of disinvested communities. Crucial to achieving this will be empowering advocates and members of those communities to develop projects and competitive funding proposals aligned with the program goals and identify sources of potential project funding beyond the California Jobs First grant program.

Scope of Work:

RISE is providing technical assistance to project proponents in their Project Inventory to further develop their project initiatives:

- To create stronger benefits for and empower leadership from disinvested communities.
- To help project proponents develop their concepts, partnerships, and generally enhance project readiness.

→ To refer project proponents to partners and other sources of technical assistance that can help them improve the competitiveness of their proposals.

→ To provide general coaching on structuring proposals, reviewing specific funding opportunities proponents are considering, and strategies to identify good funding prospects, if and when appropriate. Coaching on funding opportunities does not include general grant prospecting research.

Project proponents can register for one hour-long coaching session per week. Project proponents are required to update project descriptions, if the posture of the project has evolved since the project was entered in the project inventory form, and any materials that can help inform the coaching session at least three (3) days in advance of their session.

- General assistance to project proponents as described above: The Expert will designate a set number of "coaching" hours to be available each week for one hour appointments.

- Review and give feedback on project documents, draft proposals, inventory entries in preparation for coaching hours.

- Review project inventory for opportunities to connect partners and scale promising project ideas (those who rank highly on California Jobs First key goals of equity, sustainability, and economic growth and diversification) to the regional level. Provide advising to the convening team on these opportunities.

Scope of services

Deliverables

1. Coaching hours schedule and weekly log of hours completed.
2. Debriefing sessions with the convening team on project development and emerging opportunities, to be held every other week.
3. Written feedback and resource recommendations to project proponents, delivered as needed and appropriate.

Draft Work Plan:

July 15-30	Set up weekly advising hours/schedule and protocols. Work with CCRP Communications Associate to contact organizations and individuals who may want to access advising hours. Review RISE project inventory and sector strategies. Begin providing services.
August 1-20	Weekly advising hours continue, two meetings with the convening team to debrief.
August 20-September 10	Provide any final advising to project proponents, create a brief memo to prepare industry coordinators for their role in project development.

Estimated Timeline

Notification of Intent	July 18, 2024
Proposal Due Date	July 18, 2024
Award Notification	July 19, 2024
Initial Meeting	TBD
Contract Ends	September 30, 2024

Support & Resources

CCRP will provide the expert with the RRRISE project inventory and draft sector strategies, and assist with advertising the advising hours to appropriate audiences.

Submission

Proposal Requirements

To be considered for the Equity and Project Development Expert 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. **Project Development Knowledge:** Explain the applicant's role and how their knowledge will assist project proponents effectively throughout the project process. If there are networks already established across our region, please include those here.
 - b. **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.
 - c. **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.
 - d. **Work plan:** Briefly describe how the applicant would work with project proponents to strengthen projects and partnerships, help identify funding opportunities, and guide alignment with California Jobs First principles and objectives.
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 A). **CCRP has up to \$40,000 available for the expert's services.** The contracts will be based on cost reimbursement for services provided.

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.

CCRP 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 the California Center for Rural Policy by **July 18 by 11:59 p.m.** and should be addressed to Alisha Hammer via email to ccrp@humboldt.edu and include "Equity and Project Development Expert" in the subject line.

Evaluation & Award

Qualifications

The Equity and Project Development Expert should possess the following qualifications:

1. **Expertise:** The applicant should have knowledge of the region and necessary steps to create successful (fundable) project proposals.
2. **Experience:** The applicant should have a proven track record reflecting their work and commitment to California Jobs First principles and objectives.
3. **Resources:** The applicant should have the necessary resources to complete the project on time.
4. **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 and Project Development Expert based on the evaluation criteria. Final applicants will be called on to present to the High Road Transition Collaborative who will select the candidate.

Proposal Award Expectations

The California Center for Rural Policy shall award the contract to the proposal that best accommodates the project requirements. CCRP 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 CCRP 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–Budget Sheet

Redwood Coast Region–California Jobs First RFP for Equity and Project Development Expert Budget Template



Applicant or Organization Name:

<u>Brief Description of Deliverable or Task</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Total Project Cost	\$0.00