

Request for Letters of Research Interest (LOI)

For the preparation of the **Free Black Communities in the Shenandoah Valley Special History Study**

Project Title: Free Black Communities in the Shenandoah Valley Special History Study

Introduction:

The National Park Service (NPS), through Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park and the Interior Region 1 (IR-1), North Atlantic-Appalachian History and Preservation Assistance Office, requires the performance of research and writing of a Special History Study about free Black communities in the Shenandoah Valley in the years immediately preceding the Civil War and into the Reconstruction Era.

Additional information on this project; including project background/objectives, nature of work, stipulations, and project timeline can be found on the attached Scope of Work.

Materials Requested for Letters of Research Interest:

The prospective cooperator must submit 1) a study proposal and 2) an itemized cost proposal in response to the Scope of Work. The study proposal must describe in detail the investigator's research strategy and qualifications of personnel responsible for completion of the study. The study proposal should consist of:

1. Name, affiliation, and contact information
2. Brief Statement of Qualifications including: a) Biographical Sketch; b) Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects - demonstrated results including published works; c) Personnel (staff, faculty, sub-contractors, students) available to work on this project and their areas of expertise.
3. Project proposal that summarizes strategy, approach, and special capabilities, timelines, roles and responsibilities of personnel, specific tasks to be conducted, and deliverables. Please be as specific as possible.

The itemized budget for the project must use the attached budget worksheet and include the following:

1. Personnel services
 - a. Principal Investigator
 - b. Other personnel
 - c. Miscellaneous personal expenses
2. Supplies and equipment
3. Travel (travel costs must be factored into the budget; there is not a separate fund source for site visits and research trips)
4. Cost of analysis and report preparation
5. Overhead, Indirect, and In-kind costs as applicable
6. Other expenses
7. Total project cost

Funding:

We intend to use fiscal year 2024 funds for this project. Available funds will support a project up to \$65,000 (including indirect costs). A detailed study proposal and cost estimate is requested at this time. Project award will be subject to the availability of funds. Only universities and institutions with a CESU Master Cooperative Agreement are eligible to apply.

Submission deadline:

Deadline for responding to this letter of interest is Wednesday, May 8, 2024.

Review of Letters of Interest Received:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the factors listed below and include the credentials of personnel, approach, and reasonableness of cost. Based on review of the Letters of Interest received, a principal investigator will be invited to prepare a full application including the required federal forms (SF424 series).

Evaluation Factors:

Factor 1 - Credentials of Personnel: Lead Historian (PI). The principal investigator (PI) will serve as the lead historian and must have experience that supports successful implementation of the effort. Please include a brief Statement of Qualifications with:

1. Biographical Sketch
2. Relevant past projects and clients with brief descriptions of these projects
3. Additional personnel planning to work on this project and their areas of expertise
4. Any brief description of capabilities to successfully complete the project you wish to add

Personnel qualifications**1. The Lead Historian/ Principal Investigator**

The PI is responsible for all aspects of managing the proposed study. The PI must have a Ph.D. or equivalent in United States History. A level of experience equivalent to a Ph.D. is acceptable and may be evidenced by a publication record demonstrating a professional level of research, analysis, and report preparation. It is expected that the publication record will reflect an understanding and ability to apply research methodology, and education and experience beyond that of a project historian.

2. Project Historian(s)

Although the overall research design, guidance, and responsibility for the completed study lies with the Principal Investigator, the PI may utilize the assistance of project historians (PH) and other project staff at their discretion to accomplish the research. The minimum requirements for a PH are a Bachelor's and Master's degrees in United States History from an accredited college or university followed by two years of graduate study with a concentration in the field. A Master's thesis in history or its equivalent in research and publication are highly recommended.

3. Standards for consultants

Personnel hired or subcontracted for their special knowledge and expertise must carry academic and experiential qualifications in their particular area of expertise.

Factor 2 – Approach

The PI shall develop a proposal addressing the effort to develop the historic resource study addendum. The PI shall discuss their proposed approach and techniques to accomplish the objectives. The PI's proposal will be evaluated by a team from NPS. Proposals will be evaluated on methodology and soundness of the overall approach to accomplish the goals of the project.

Factor 3 – Reasonableness of Cost

Proposals shall be evaluated to determine whether they are balanced with respect to cost and fair and reasonable pricing. Evaluations will include an analysis to determine the PI's understanding of the requirements of the solicitation, credentials, and scholarly approach.

Contact:

Direct responses of interest before the closing date to Bethany Serafine via email. Questions may be directed to Bethany Serafine via email.

Bethany Serafine
Historian, History & Preservation Assistance
National Park Service
Interior Region 1, North Atlantic -Appalachian
Cell (617) 455-5778
bethany_serafine@nps.gov