

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Underground Railroad Interpretive Web Essays and Handbook

The National Park Service (NPS) is seeking the services of a qualified individual, firm, or organization (contractor) through a cooperative agreement with the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) to produce a complete NPS interpretive handbook for the Underground Railroad (UGRR), according to requirements specified in this Request for Proposals (RFP). The contract is to be administered by ASALH and the work prepared for and completed in coordination with the NPS' National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom (NTF) Program

Interested contractors should submit a proposal and cost estimate in response to this RFP to ASALH no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on June 12, 2020. Electronic copies of proposals may be directed to Ms. Rachelle Eloizin, reloizin@asalh.org

PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 1990, the U.S. Congress enacted Public Law 101-628 directing the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study of the Underground Railroad and to publish an interpretive handbook on the topic. The resulting handbook was published in 1998. At the same time, the Special Resource Study of the Underground Railroad produced in response to this law led to the 1998 National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act, which created the NTF within the NPS. The NTF maintains a network of historic sites, interpretive and educational programs, and research facilities with a verifiable connection to the UGRR. Sites, programs, and facilities are nominated to the NTF for inclusion in the network. After twenty years, there are 660 members representing 40 states, DC and the U.S. Virgin Islands, with new members added bi-annually. Scholarly research on aspects of UGRR history has increased during this time period. As a result of this new scholarship and the information uncovered through the Network, the original handbook requires updating.

The current project is expected to produce a complete, print-ready draft of an NPS interpretive handbook on the UGRR, including all research, writing, photograph selection, and layout and design. The format of the handbook is anticipated to be an edited collection of 16-20 essays and photographs, consistent with NPS standards and other similar NPS publications (such as the Reconstruction and Cold War handbooks). It will require the selection and coordination of scholars/authors experienced in UGRR history, based on a list of proposed topics from the NPS and in coordination with the NPS, to contribute to the edited work. The final product will be made publicly available through www.nps.gov, as well as in published form at conferences, symposia, and other educational, organizational, and community-based events. Printing and distribution of the interpretive handbook is not included under this task agreement.

This project is being carried out under authority provided by 54 USC 101702(a), 54 USC 10172(b), and the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Act, 54 USC 308301 et

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seq. The NPS is the Federal agency tasked by the Secretary of the Interior with the responsibility for implementing the Network to Freedom program. ASALH is assisting the NPS in completing the current effort through a cooperative agreement with the NPS. Completion of the project is intended to promote greater public and private understanding of the UGRR. While much has been written about the UGRR and it is referenced in popular culture frequently, misperceptions continue. This project will make accurate information available to the public, particularly students.

REQUIRED CONSULTANT QUALIFICATIONS

The selected contractor must have demonstrated experience in UGRR history and successfully preparing interpretive publications similar to the proposed handbook. Ideal candidates will also possess the following desired qualifications:

- a) One or more principal staff that meet the qualifications of a GS-0170-11/12 Historian as established by the Federal government's Office of Personnel and Management.
- b) Prior experience researching, writing, and producing NPS interpretive histories, historic contexts, or theme studies.
- c) Demonstrated experience in editing and collaborating with multiple authors and scholars to produce an edited publication.
- d) Prior experience completing the design and layout of a print publication.

If the consultant comprises a firm or organization, then a Principal Investigator must be designated for the project. The Principal Investigator must agree to be principally responsible for all work conducted by other contractor personnel for the project. The individual selected as the Principal Investigator may not change during the project without prior written approval of ASALH and the NPS.

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Scope of Work

The project will produce a complete, camera-ready draft of an official NPS interpretive handbook for the UGRR. The selected consultant will be expected to complete the following tasks:

- a) Prepare a substantially complete draft of an NPS handbook for the UGRR, including all research and writing necessary to convey the history of important topics about the UGRR through a series of edited essays, the selection of photographs and images that illustrate this history, and the layout and design of the publication. Frequent interaction with NPS staff is expected, particularly in selection of essay subjects. This interaction will most likely occur via email and conference calls.
- b) Provide drafts of all elements of the draft publication (e.g., layouts, designs, essays, text, illustrations and photographs, and cover design, etc.) for review by the NPS through the course of the project. Work collaboratively with the NPS to revise these publication elements, as necessary.
- c) Coordinate with ASALH to develop a final deliverable that consists of the fully-formed, camera-ready, interpretive handbook, compliant with NPS publication standards. The intent is to be able to provide the final deliverable to a publisher for printing with minimal additional work/modification required. (*Note: ASALH will manage the design and publication process*)
- d) Identify and engage the services of scholars/authors to contribute essays to the interpretive handbook, in consultation and coordination with the NPS. Coordinate with ASALH to approve payment or stipends to these contributors is expected as part of the scope of work. Selected scholars/authors are expected to possess knowledge and experience in specific topics of UGRR history relevant to the interpretive handbook. (*Note: ASALH will manage the payment distribution and budget process.*)
- e) Research and identify illustrations and photographs of UGRR subjects for use in the interpretive handbook. Coordinate with ASALH to collect and obtain permission to use illustrations and photographs of UGRR subjects for use in the interpretive handbook. (*Note: ASALH will obtain the necessary copyright permissions.*)

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PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS

For evaluation purposes, proposals should provide sufficient information as to assist ASALH and the NPS in determining the most qualified contractor for the project. Contractors interested in bidding should submit a written proposal that includes the following elements:

- Name of the individual(s) that would be working on the project and their proposed area(s) of responsibility. If proposing as a firm, project team, or organization, describe the proposed staff structure and how it is organized to provide the services requested by this RFP.
- Description of the specific, relevant education, experience, and qualifications of the principal Investigator and any contractor staff, demonstrating experience in UGRR history and successfully preparing interpretive publications similar to the proposed handbook.
- Information on projects of a similar nature and of significant work completed by the contractor in the past five (5) years. Include specific dates and types of services provided, and highlight success in meeting work schedules, project budgets, and product deadlines.
- A list of references (at least three, but not more than five) that may be contacted.
- A short narrative that responds to the scope of work as described in this RFP, which demonstrates the consultant's proposed approach to the project and capability to accomplish the desired goals.
- A proposed budget that includes hourly labor rates of project personnel, the number of hours required to complete each task or product, and any necessary and appropriate project travel costs.
- A proposed project schedule.

All proposals must be received **no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on June 12, 2020**. They should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight forward, concise description of the contractor's qualifications and capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Proposals may be submitted via email in electronic format (MS Word or PDF format) to Ms. Rachelle Eloizin, reloizin@asalh.org

ASALH will confirm receipt of submissions. However, if there are any issues (e.g., with attachments working correctly), the contractor is responsible for resolving these issues with an alternative submission method acceptable to ASALH and the NPS.

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SELECTION CRITERIA

Submittals will be evaluated and ranked based on the following factors, presented in no particular order:

- Qualifications of Principal Investigator and other key personnel.
- Responsiveness of the proposal to the project's purpose and scope of work.
- Knowledge and experience in UGRR history.
- Experience successfully preparing interpretive publications similar to the proposed handbook.
- Demonstrated capability of meeting projected deadlines and successfully completing contracts of this type.
- Past performance and references.
- Schedule and cost.

TERMS and CONDITIONS

- a) ASALH reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal.
- b) ASALH reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any consultant.
- c) ASALH and NPS shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by consultants in preparing, submitting or presenting its response to this RFP.
- d) Any and all rights to work produced through this project will be vested in the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, including any copyrights.
- e) The selected consultant shall adhere to guidelines regarding potential conflict of interest as outlined in *The NPS Historic Preservation Fund Grants Manual*. These guidelines are clearly stated in Chapter 3, Section C, 1-11 of the Manual. The selected consultant must also comply with all applicable provisions of OMB Circular A-110 REVISED 11/19/93 As Further Amended 9/30/99.

QUESTIONS

Respondents are invited to submit written questions requesting clarifications or explanations of the information contained in this RFP. Please direct all proposal or contract-related questions to Ms. Rachelle Eloizin, reloizin@asalh.org Questions pertaining to the UGRR handbook and its production may be directed to Diane Miller, NTF Program Manager, at diane_miller@nps.gov.

OUTLINE of POTENTIAL ESSAY TOPICS

1. Intro/Overview

- Definition, Origins of Term, Not about safe houses, When Started, When Ended, How many people escaped, Destinations
- Like slavery which had the chronological and geographical dimensions, so did the UGRR

Slavery and Resistance

2. Slavery

- Slave Trade, including especially domestic slave trade
- Slavery in America, origins and development, how slavery existed in both north and south, different crops/industries, entrepreneurship

3. Culture and Resistance

- Slave Life and Culture, including African retentions
 - Gullah Geechee
- Slave Resistance and Rebellion

The UGRR in time and space

4. Colonial

- Native American/frontier, Spanish Florida, French Louisiana, marroonage), Caribbean

5. UGRR on the borderlands

- Canada, northern areas, frontier

6. UGRR in the Midwest

- slavery, UGRR move west, early/mid 19th century, Canada, frontier

7. UGRR in Texas, California & the West

- Mexico, British Columbia, maritime

Special Topics

8. Legal Issues

- Fugitive Slave Law, Freedom suits

9. Military, include USCT, contraband

- Revolutionary War
- War of 1812
- Seminole Indian Wars
- Civil War

10. Abolitionism vs. UGRR

11. Religion and the UGRR

- Quakers
- AME
- Presbyterians
- Methodist Episcopal

12. Importance of family and faith networks

13. Women and UGRR

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14. Maritime

15. Kidnappings and Reverse UGRR

16. Native American and UGRR/Slavery

17. Underground Railroad as Activism

- What constitutes UGRR activism and how/why did people become involved?
- The freedom seekers-Typical Runaway, group escapes, reasons for running away, when escaped
- Organizations dedicated to UGRR- Vigilance Committees, Freedom/Fugitive Aid Societies, Sewing Circles, Prince Hall Mason
- The role of the Press
- African American UGRR activists and the larger struggle for Civil Rights
- The effect of the 1850 Fugitive Slave Law on UGRR and activism
- On-going activism after 13th Amendment

18. Researching the UGRR

- Documenting the UGRR
- Landscapes and the UGRR (Geographies of Resistance)

19. Memory and the UGRR

- Memoirs
- Siebert Collection
- Popular Culture and the UGRR
- UGRR in the Arts

20. Preservation and Interpretation

- Cultural Tourism
- Economic Development
- Interpreting Difficult History
- Preservation of buildings, landscapes, cemeteries
- The use of technology to interpret “missing” history
- NPS and UGRR—NTF and NPS sites with UGRR connections