



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Rare is seeking a consultant or firm to provide public relations and communications support for the Solution Search award winners, finalists, and contest as a whole.

September 11, 2017

**Rare, Inc.
1310 N. Courthouse Road, Suite 110
Arlington, VA 22201
USA**

Introduction and Executive Summary

Introduction:

Award of the contract resulting from this RFP will be based upon the most responsive Vendor/Contractor whose offer will be the most advantageous to Rare, Inc. in terms of cost, functionality, and other factors as specified elsewhere in this RFP.

Vendor's proposal in response to this RFP will be incorporated into the final agreement between Rare, Inc. and the selected Vendor/Contractor. The suggested format for proposals is as shown below:

1. Executive Summary
2. Project Management Approach and Experience
3. Detailed and Itemized Pricing/Budget
4. Appendix 1: References (Three references for which you have performed similar work)
5. Appendix 2: Project Team Staffing
6. Appendix 3: Company Overview (if relevant)
7. Appendix 4: Writing samples of similar assignments (preferably reports with a strong story-telling and analysis component)

Executive Summary:

Rare inspires change so people and nature thrive. To fulfill this mission, Rare searches the globe to identify what's already working – proven solutions – in conservation so it can then incubate, test and scale for a greater global impact. Rare developed Solution Search (www.solutionsearch.org) as a means for identifying the solutions. Solution Search uses a crowd-sourcing contest model to build a database of solutions and network of practitioners. In this RFP, Rare is looking for a firm or individual expert consultant provide public relations and communications support for the Solution Search award winners, finalists, and contest as a whole. The firm's contract will run from approximately October 2017 – December 2017.

Business Overview & Background

A. About Rare (www.rare.org)

Rare inspires change so people and nature thrive.

Conservation ultimately comes down to people – their behaviors toward nature, their beliefs about its value, and their ability to protect it without sacrificing basic life needs. And so, conservationists must become as skilled in social change as in science; as committed to community-based solutions as national and international policymaking.

Nowhere are community-based solutions needed more than in the world's areas of highest biodiversity – from Latin America and the Caribbean to Africa and India to Asia and the Pacific islands. These areas may be rich in natural resources, but poverty is also high, making social and environmental change a challenge for hundreds of thousands of communities.

Rare and its partners in 50+ countries throughout these regions are committed to designing conservation programs that benefit both people and nature – ensuring that change is embraced and sustained.

The Rare approach includes:

- 1) Determining human behaviors causing threats to biodiversity, such as overfishing, illegal logging, or unsustainable agriculture
- 2) Conducting an ongoing search for the most innovative community-based solutions proven to change these behaviors – what Rare calls conservation “bright spots”
- 3) Launching behavior change campaigns to increase adoption of these alternative behaviors in the world’s highest priority areas for conservation.

B. About Solution Search (www.solutionsearch.org) and Farming for Biodiversity

The Issue at Hand

Unsustainable agricultural practices remain one of the greatest threats to ecosystems and biodiversity; they also endanger the stability of food supplies and essential commodities and are a listed cause of climate change. The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization reports that by 2050 the world’s population is predicted to reach 9.1 billion, a 34 percent increase over today. To feed this population – many of whom will be richer and more demanding, food production must increase by 70 percent.¹ Yet even at current production levels, biodiversity (that of the crops, the soils, the plants and the animals that surround them) has suffered greatly. Since beginning of century, the world has lost 75 percent of crop diversity. Tropical forests are falling at 29 hectares per minute.² Agriculture causes nearly one-quarter of all greenhouse gas emissions.³ And, sadly, critical habitats continue to be overtaken by farmlands at alarming rates. For example, throughout Africa and Asia, small-scale farmlands and industrial crops – such as palm oil - are replacing elephant habitat, resulting in human-elephant conflict as elephants trample fields in search of food. This clash is partially responsible for the nearly 85% decrease in elephant population.⁴ Unfortunately, it is not unique to the rest of the world. Solutions are sorely needed, and they are needed soon.

The good news is that solutions exist. One small-scale farmer in Kenya has found a way to productively use the elephants’ fear of bees to avoid a conflict that often results in killing elephants that raid croplands. This farmer lined his fences with bee hives. Not only do the elephants stay off his lands, he now has increased pollination of crops and a side honey production business. In another example, in Brazil, farmers are building in agro-forestry corridors to protect the lion tamarin monkeys while also protecting their income. These people are just two of the innovators around the world that have found promising approaches for protecting biodiversity while also ensuring successful agricultural production.

Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity is on its way to identifying, spotlighting and promoting similar biodiversity-friendly agricultural solutions worldwide. Between December 2016 and March 2017, the program collected over 330 promising approaches. It will continue to build on those successes in the next six months. Solution Search utilizes competition theory to engage a broad range of stakeholders, develop and share a large knowledge base, celebrate success, and create a platform for critical issues and solutions to receive increased prominence. Further,

¹ Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. (2009). *Global Agriculture towards 2050*.
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/docs/Issues_papers/HLEF2050_Global_Agriculture.pdf

² Shand, H. *Biological Meltdown: The Loss of Agricultural Biodiversity*. Reimagine!
<http://www.reimaginerpe.org/node/921>

³ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (2015). *Agriculture and Climate Change*.
<https://www.oecd.org/tad/sustainable-agriculture/agriculture-climate-change-september-2015.pdf>

⁴ World Wildlife Fund. *Human-Elephant Conflict*.
http://www.panda.org/what_we_do/endangered_species/elephants/human_elephant_conflict.cfm

this Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity contest is part of a broader project that will then continue to propagate the most promising approaches through capacity-building workshops and a peer-to-peer learning network.

The Solution Search Model

Solution Search uses an open-invitation, well-publicized contest model to achieve its goals. The contest, built by Rare, convenes leading organizations and global experts and then leverages their networks and knowledge to engage audiences around the world to increase impact.

Each contest follows a similar process, including:

- Search preparations, such as finalizing contest questions, securing judges and partners, developing application criteria and finalizing the website (used for running the contest) for launch;
- Contest publicity, including soliciting entries through a variety of venues and events, posting on list-servs, relevant forums and social media, and connecting via individual outreach;
- Judging facilitation with randomized multi-stage reviews that select a Judges' Choice winner (the first grand prize), finalists (up for the second grand prize), side prize winners and;
- Public voting during which both Solution Search and the finalists solicit votes from across the country (or around the world) – selecting the second grand prize, the People's Choice;
- Award announcements, including developing public relations strategies and messages, planning awards events and a strategic development workshop for the finalists;
- Incubation and replication efforts, such as developing an actionable lessons-learned document, promoting actions by others, and working with the capacity-building workshops (termed Campaigning-for-Conservation) for replication.

Past contests have proven this model is highly successful. Over three contests (topics including: coastal overfishing, nature-based climate adaptation, US-based weather disaster risk reduction), Solution Search has identified over 200 solutions from over 60 countries and achieved nearly 500 million media impressions. Across all contests held, there is already significant evidence that several solutions (both winning and non-winning) are being replicated and expanding their impact.

Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity

Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity surfaces, supports and promotes innovative solutions that conserve biodiversity on agricultural lands and the surrounding environment. It also builds understanding among local, regional and national leaders on these effective approaches to build energy towards furthering their adoption.

Launched at the UN Convention for Biological Diversity Conference of Parties in December 2016, Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity already has great momentum.

Committed contest partners and judges represent organizations including: Rare, The Global Environment Facility, Patagonia, Save the Children, GAIN, IFOAM - Organics International, Deutsche Welle, Inter-American Development Bank, Stockholm Resilience Center, EcoAgriculture Partners, United Nations Rapporteurs, CONABIO (Mexico), Panorama, World Wildlife Fund, Blue Solutions, Global Island Partnership, Food Tank, Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat, and Young Professionals for Agricultural Development. The contest has

also engaged a host of other organizations throughout its time as well. Much of the program is funded by the International Climate Initiative (IKI), a German initiative supported by The Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) on the basis of a decision adopted by the German Bundestag.

The 330+ contest submissions (all identifying biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices) vastly exceeded the 100-entry target and represent a breadth and depth of solutions around the world. From December 2016 through March 2017, this work garnered over 600 million media impressions worldwide. These figures also demonstrate the energy and interest behind the topic – and the likelihood of future attention as the contest progresses.

On June 12, in honor of World Agriculture Day (June 11), Solution Search: Farming for Biodiversity announced the ten finalists for its second grand prize, the People's Choice,⁵ which is selected by public vote. This process provides the ten organizations with media opportunities and an immediate call-to-action within their communities; it helps to build recognition of the issues at hand, the potential solutions and the organizations' work. Past contests have garnered up to an additional 175 million media impressions worldwide during this voting phase. The additional awareness and entry-level behavior (voting for a finalist) provides on step towards paving the way for further change in communities around the world.

Finally, at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of Parties (UNFCCC COP) in Bonn, Germany in November 2017, the partners, finalists and judges will come together to share knowledge and experiences during a two-day workshop and awards ceremony. Here, among 100+ international leaders on climate change, agriculture, sustainable development and conservation, Solution Search will announce the contest winners and celebrate all the submitted solutions. This high-profile event not only brings further attention, but it also begins a peer-to-peer learning process that will be expanded post-contest.

Post-ceremony, Solution Search will produce a report on the actionable lessons learned identified during the contest and move into the next phases of the broader solution replication efforts: Campaigning for Conservation workshops⁶ and the peer-to-peer online exchange.

Detailed Specifications

Rare seeks a firm or consultant to support the public relations and communications surrounding Solution Search's awards announcements and events. Reporting to and working closely with the Solution Search management team, the firm or consultant will be responsible for managing the contest's public relations and media relationships for this event as well as creative services and editorial strategy to deliver high quality placements, effective collateral, and meaningful stories that bring the contest's vision, finalists and solutions to life. The focus of these materials will include: Solution Search, biodiversity-friendly agriculture, the finalists and winners and their winning solutions.

The firm or expert consultant will work closely with Rare's marketing and communications team to ensure messaging aligns with the contest's overall brand.

⁵ The first grand prize, the Judges' Choice, ten finalists and side prize winners were selected on May 12 during the high-level judges' call.

⁶ For more information on Campaigning for Conservation, visit <https://www.rare.org/campaigning-for-conservation>.

Further, the firm or expert consultant should expect to work with other contest partners and judges (such as IFOAM-Organics International) to promote their participation and include quotes where relevant.

Assumptions & Constraints

Vendors should include any costs in its budget that will be a part of regular project operations (telephone use, travel, etc.). The total project budget should reflect all costs associated with this work.

Terms and Conditions

This contract would begin immediately after hire and would run until approximately December 22, 2017.

Selection Criteria/Evaluation Process

The firm or consultant should be an expert in public relations and communications and have some established relationships with print, radio, television and online journalists. The firm or consultant would ideally have some experience in the conservation, land use and/or development space and have worked on various aspects of agriculture, sustainability and/or biodiversity science. The consultant must be excellent at communications, particularly in English, and excel in a dynamic entrepreneurial environment.

Submitted proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria listed (in no particular order of priority):

1. Completion of all required proposal responses in the correct format.
2. The extent to which vendor's proposed solution fulfills Rare's stated requirements as set out in this RFP.
3. An assessment of the vendor's ability to deliver the indicated service in accordance with the specifications set out in this RFP.
4. The vendor's stability, experience, and record of past performance in delivering such services.
5. Availability of sufficient high quality vendor personnel with the required skills and experience for the specific approach proposed.
6. Overall cost of vendor's proposal.

Rare may, at its discretion and without explanation to the prospective vendors, at any time choose to discontinue this RFP without obligation to such prospective vendors.

Submission Deadlines

All submissions for responding to this request must be submitted by email and delivered to our office, as stated below, no later than:

September 29, 2017
No later than 5:00 pm EDT

Rare will contact those firms it would like to investigate further during the week of October 2, 2017 for interviews with a final decision made in early October.

Submission Delivery Address

The delivery address to be used for all submissions is:

Solution Search Manager
Rare, Inc.
1310 N. Courthouse Road
Arlington, VA 22201 USA
703-522-5070
info@solutionsearch.org

Submission Questions and Clarifications

You may contact the following person if you have any questions or require clarification on any topics covered in this Request for Proposal:

Solution Search Manager
703-522-5070
info@solutionsearch.org