

Request for Proposal (RFP) for Feasibility Study on Hybrid REIT/Land Trust for Animal Agricultural Land

Introduction

Farm Sanctuary is seeking proposals from qualified consulting firms or individuals to conduct a feasibility study for the creation of a hybrid Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) and Land Trust (LT) focused on animal agricultural land. The project aims to explore the viability, legal considerations, financial structures, and potential impacts of establishing "The Food Systems Shift Trust" to support equitable, sustainable, and plant-based food systems.

Project Background

Farm Sanctuary has garnered support from institutional funders interested in sustainable agricultural transitions. The Food Systems Shift Trust seeks to leverage land assets to facilitate positive impacts on animal welfare, environmental sustainability, and societal equity. The Trust will engage impact investors, high-net-worth individuals, and retail investors interested in transformative food system initiatives.

Objectives

- Assess the feasibility of establishing a hybrid REIT/LT structure for animal agricultural land transition.
- Evaluate legal, financial, and regulatory considerations for the proposed Trust.
- Determine potential risks, challenges, and opportunities associated with the initiative.
- Develop a comprehensive business plan and investor prospectus for the Trust.
- Provide recommendations for sustainable land acquisition strategies and investment options.

Scope of Work

The consulting firm/individual will:

- Review provided project documents, including proposals, background information, and proposed structure for farmland.
- Conduct market research and analysis on REIT/LT models in the agricultural and philanthropic sectors.
- Analyze tax-exempt status qualification under IRC § 501(c)(3), public charity status, and potential risks to stakeholders.
- Assess real property tax exemption eligibility and compliance with constitutional, civil rights, fair housing, and agricultural laws.
- Develop financial models, ROI projections, and fundraising strategies for capital acquisition and sustainable operations.
- Identify potential partners, stakeholders, and engagement strategies for Trust development and scalability.
- Deliver a detailed feasibility report, business plan, investor prospectus, and presentation materials.

Deliverables

- Feasibility Study Report including market analysis, legal/regulatory assessment, financial projections, and risk analysis.
- Comprehensive Business Plan outlining Trust structure, governance, operations, and funding strategies.
- Investor Prospectus highlighting investment opportunities, impact metrics, and ROI projections.
- Presentation materials for stakeholder engagement, fundraising, and project promotion.

Timeline

The project is expected to be completed within 4-5 months from the contract commencement date, with milestone reviews and progress updates as agreed upon.

Proposal Submission

Interested parties should submit:

- Company/Individual profile highlighting relevant experience and expertise.
- Proposed methodology, work plan, and timeline for the feasibility study.
- Detailed budget breakdown including fees, expenses, and deliverables.
- References or case studies demonstrating successful similar projects.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Experience and qualifications of the consulting firm/individual.
- Methodology, approach, and feasibility study plan.
- Budget competitiveness and value proposition.
- Demonstrated understanding of legal, financial, and operational complexities in REIT/LT structures.

Contact Information

For inquiries and proposal submission, please contact Cynthia Von Schlichten/ Legal at cvonschlichten@farmsanctuary.org by June 15, 2024.

Additional Information

Appendices:

- Sample documents and project proposals provided by Farm Sanctuary and Bank of America Philanthropy Advisors.

Note: The timeline, budget, and specific requirements can be adjusted during contract negotiation based on the proposals received and mutual agreement between Farm Sanctuary and the selected consulting partner.