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Request for Proposals (Part 3)

Web Developer & Creative Consultant for FEMA-Funded WUI Project

***Beyond Parcel-Level Risk Assessment & Mitigation:
Engaging Fire Service & Community Stakeholders***

Proposals due: 11:59 pm ET on Monday, January 8, 2024

Project Background & Description

The SFPE Foundation currently holds a FEMA Fire Prevention & Safety Grant (FY2022) to create an expanded [WUI Virtual Handbook](#) with updated and new content, a template for risk assessment based on best practices, and a robust suite of supporting materials to help fire service personnel communicate with property owners and community leaders about fire risks and parcel-level and community-level mitigation strategies to reduce wildland-urban interface (WUI) fire losses.

As WUI communities grow, and WUI fires proliferate, more fire departments with very little experience in WUI fires and/or a shortage of personnel and resources will be called on to protect their communities. Adopting strategies now to prioritize mitigation that slows or prevents fire spread is critical. At the same time, research increasingly shows that mitigation strategies focused on parcel-level structural hardening alone are insufficient; we need to factor in community-level exposure possibilities and local context and get individual and community buy-in to make important changes. The fire engineering community can help meet these needs by providing fire departments with more persuasive materials—grounded in science-based engineering methods—to convince property owners, developers, and community leaders to make the changes needed to better protect against WUI fire threats. When paired with communications tools targeting property owners, developers, businesses, and community leaders, this guidance can be an essential resource for fire departments to demonstrate the value of investment in WUI fire safety.

To that end, this project will expand and revise the existing SFPE Foundation *WUI Virtual Handbook* to make it a more flexible tool that can be utilized for a wider range of needs, including (1) training property inspectors, (2) conducting WUI property assessments, (3) engaging with homeowners regarding WUI risks and mitigation activities, and (4) engaging community leaders in understanding WUI fire risks and potential mitigation activities. It will be designed to meet the needs of more- and less-experienced departments and to empower fire service personnel to reduce community risk while raising awareness of complementary tools, resources, and training available through organizations operating in this space.

In this request for proposals (part 3 of 3), we are seeking an experienced **Web Developer & Creative Consultant (WDCC)** who will be responsible for designing and creating the required communications materials for outreach to property owners and community leaders that will accompany the revised version of the handbook; developing



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the design and implementing the interface for new handbook components; expanding the web-based version of the handbook to incorporate the new content produced by the Engineering Technical Consultant (ETC) leading the project; providing a final PDF version of the revised handbook that can be downloaded for offline use; improving the user experience and function of the web-based version of the tool; and producing four short informational videos providing guidance on how to use the handbook (1) as a training tool, (2) to conduct property assessments, (3) to engage with property owners, and (4) to engage with community leaders. The WDCC will work closely with the ETC and the Engineering Risk Consultant, as well as the Advisory Panel and SFPE Foundation staff throughout the project.

**Note: We are soliciting proposals for all three consultants that will be contracted under this grant simultaneously. Applicants may submit proposals for multiple open consulting positions, but we will not select the same consultant for more than one contract. Applicants will not be advantaged by submitting “team” proposals that propose to take on two or three of the consulting contracts as a group. Each consultant wishing to be considered must submit their proposal independently to the relevant opening: Engineering Technical Consultant, Engineering Risk Consultant, or Web Developer and Creative Consultant.*

Tasks & Deliverables

The list in this section describes our minimum expectations for the project. Respondents are welcome to elaborate on these ideas or make additional suggestions to improve upon the project and/or our approach.

Task 1: Review existing WUI Virtual Handbook and identify areas for functional improvement.

- Work closely with SFPE Foundation staff, the Advisory Panel, and the Engineering Technical Consultant (ETC) to identify priorities for functional improvements to the web-based interface and/or PDF version of the existing handbook.
- Present a plan for expansion and development of new communications material and new sections of the handbook—created jointly with the ETC—to the AP and SFPE Foundation staff for approval. The WDCC will be responsible for designing and creating the required communications materials for outreach to property owners and community leaders, based on input from the ETC and feedback from the ERC.

Task 2: Produce a revised version of the web-based, mobile-friendly handbook with new and updated images, graphics, and other communications content, and ensure effective integration of the expanded handbook with the new communications materials.

- Work with work with the ETC to source images, create graphics, and develop one-page flyers to accompany existing and new content. Where new graphics are needed that do not already exist, the WDCC is responsible for creating them.
- The WDCC is responsible for confirming and documenting all applicable rights to use all images/graphics contained in the handbook or its companion materials.
- Must be accessible from the SFPE Foundation’s website: <https://www.sfpe.org/foundation/home>
- Must be built on SFPE’s existing CMS (Higher Logic); must not incur additional hosting fees or costs beyond what is currently covered under SFPE’s CMS agreement.



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- Must emphasize user experience and easy navigation.
- Must be accessible (with no significant loss of function) from a tablet, smart phone, and desktop or laptop computer.
- Should include user instructions and a method for contacting SFPE staff with any feedback, concerns, or issues with the webpages.
- The final product must include a “user guide” for SFPE staff who may be responsible for making edits to the web-based Handbook in the future.
- Work with SFPE Foundation staff to make sure any required disclaimers or boilerplate text regarding the funding source and support for the project are included as appropriate.

Task 3: Feedback & Revisions

- At least one representative from the WDCC must attend the two virtual workshops to heard feedback on revised handbook materials from fire service and fire engineering personnel. The WDCC is **not** expected to attend the pilots.
- Based on feedback received at the two virtual workshops led by the ETC and SFPE Foundation staff, work with the ETC to make revisions to the content on the web-based platform and add or revise the communications materials that are used by fire service personnel to communicate with community stakeholders prior to the start of the pilot implementation sessions.
- Following the pilots and the formal report from the ERC, make final revisions to the web-based version of the handbook and any accompanying communications materials.

Task 4: Design and Format a Digital Desk Copy of the Virtual Handbook

- This should be completed after all web-based content and accompanying communications materials are finalized.
- Must be accessible and downloadable from the SFPE Foundation’s website.
- Must be easy to navigate, including internal hyperlinks for quick movement between sections.
- Must be accessible (with no significant loss of function) from a tablet, smart phone, and desktop or laptop computer.
- May include the option to download specific sections rather than the entire manuscript.

Task 5: Dissemination Activities

- With oversight from the AP and SFPE Foundation staff, the WDCC is responsible for working with the ETC to develop four brief videos providing guidance on how to use the handbook (1) as a training tool, (2) to conduct property assessments, (3) to engage with property owners, and (4) to engage with community leaders.

Project Timeline

January 2024	SFPE Foundation contracts with an Engineering Technical Consultant (ETC), an Engineering Risk Consultant (ERC), and a Web Developer and Design Consultant (WDDC); project kick-off meeting held with Advisory Panel.
Feb. – June 2024	<p>The ETC will review and update existing technical content in the handbook; develop a new section on community-level vulnerabilities and mitigation tactics; and create a basic checklist template that's integrated with the handbook's sections. The WDDC will work with the ETC to source images, create graphics, and develop one-page flyers to accompany existing and new content; they will also advance functional improvements to the handbook in both web-based and PDF formats. The ERC will provide feedback and input throughout. A draft revised version with accompanying visuals will be due by the end of June 2024.</p> <p>The ERC, in consultation with the ETC and WDDC, will develop and present a draft plan to the AP for how to engage participants in evaluating the revised handbook during the two national virtual workshops with fire personnel and engineers planned for July. The plan must be approved by the AP and SFPE Foundation staff by the end of June 2024.</p>
July 2024	<p>With the ETC, the SFPE Foundation will host two half-day national virtual workshops for feedback to ensure the revised handbook meets the needs of users and communicates the latest in engineering expertise. At the first workshop, 20+ fire personnel will be invited to test and review the expanded tool and accompanying communications materials for outreach to property owners and community leaders. Departments with varying levels of experience in WUI property fire risk assessment and mitigation will be invited to ensure the tool meets the needs of a wide range of communities. At the second, 20+ insurance and fire engineering professionals will be invited to give feedback on the tool and help identify any additional guidance that needs to be incorporated, as well as potential challenges to implementation in the field; review will focus in particular on the new checklist template and scoring methodology.</p> <p>The WDDC must have at least one representative attend these virtual meetings to hear feedback on the revised handbook and accompanying communications materials.</p>
August - October 2024	<p>The ETC and WDDC will revise the handbook and supporting materials based on workshop feedback and ERC recommendations.</p> <p>Planning for the pilot visits begins; the ETC and ERC work together with the host fire departments to coordinate. All four in-person pilots should be planned for November and/or December 2024.</p> <p>The ERC will present their plan for formal evaluation of the risk reduction potential of the handbook to the Advisory Panel and Foundation Staff for feedback and approval; this will include collecting qualitative and quantitative data during the four pilot visits</p>

	that will be analyzed as part of their formal report. The final evaluation plan must be approved by the AP no later than 5 business days prior to the first pilot site visit.
Nov. – Dec. 2024	The four pilot visits take place with ETC and ERC representatives in attendance. The WDCC does not need to attend. The Colorado Springs and Boise Fire Departments, and a small department in Kentucky, will serve as 3 of the pilot departments. The other pilot department (located in the US) is yet to be determined.
January 2025	The ERC completes their assessment of all data gathered through the workshops, pilots, and desk review, and presents a draft report to the AP and SFPE Foundation staff by the end of January 2025. A final report incorporating any feedback from the AP or staff is due no later than the end of February 2025.
Feb. – May 2025	The ETC and WDCC take the feedback from the ERC and AP and make any final revisions to the handbook and supporting materials. With oversight from the AP and SFPE Foundation staff, the ETC and the WDCC develop four brief videos providing guidance on how to use the handbook (1) as a training tool, (2) to conduct property assessments, (3) to engage with property owners, and (4) to engage with community leaders. The WDCC is primarily responsible for this process. The ERC provides feedback on the videos to ensure they address needs identified in the evaluation of risk reduction potential.
June – Aug 2025	The videos and handbook will be made available online and announced via SFPE Foundation press release; SFPE Foundation staff and other project personnel conduct community outreach and dissemination exercises targeting the U.S. fire service and other stakeholders.

Cost and Duration

As outlined above, the project is expected to run from January 2024 – August 2025. As this project is primarily externally funded, we have strict cost requirements. **Successful proposals may not exceed \$55,000 USD total.**

This total cost should be inclusive of all project deliverables described above, except for those items noted below:

- If needed to purchase images or visuals to support communications tools, some modest funding (~\$4,000 USD total) may be available by mutual prior written agreement with the SFPE Foundation.
- The WDCC is not expected to travel as part of this contract.



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How to Respond

Applicants should submit a single proposal (in PDF format) no longer than 6 pages single-spaced outlining:

- 1. Qualifications and experience for all relevant team members + Proposed approach to revising and expanding the existing *WUI Virtual Handbook* (4 pages max)**
 - a. This must include demonstrated expertise with front-end web development and the ability to work independently on our CMS (Content Management System), powered by HigherLogic. The right candidate will have advanced skills in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, as well as a background in user experience and/or interaction design for web-based interfaces. The same consultant (or consulting group) must possess a flair for creative graphic design and layout (Adobe and/or Canva preferred), as this contract also requires layout design and formatting for a digital version of the handbook that can be downloaded and easily navigated for offline use.
 - b. This section should also demonstrate that the candidate has significant experience developing communications materials for a general public audience, such as infographics, fact sheets, and other means of visual communication.
 - c. Expertise in digital video production for online learning and promotion is also required.
 - d. This section must include links to an online portfolio or examples of previous projects involving original website development, as well as projects involving formatting and layout for reports or other digital reference materials.
 - e. Experience developing websites or tools for public service employees, local government, or the fire service in the United States would be a plus, as would experience developing webpages or report layouts for engineering audiences.
 - f. Include a description that advises on which team members named in the proposal will be responsible for which tasks identified in the proposal.
 - g. This must account for all project deliverables described in this request for proposals.
- 2. Commitment to project timeline and deadlines for completion of deliverables (1 page max)**
 - a. The successful respondent must be able to meet the deadlines and deliverables as described in this request for proposals. Include an affirmative acknowledgment of these deadlines and assurance that you will be able to meet them on time and on budget.
- 3. Budget & Reporting Requirements (1 page max)**
 - a. Respondents should indicate that they can provide all project deliverables within the maximum cost allowed for this project of \$55,000 USD.
 - b. Once a proposal is selected, SFPE Foundation staff will determine the timeline for payment as part of the contracting process with the selected respondent.
 - c. The successful respondent must be able to keep detailed records (including receipts) for all expenses incurred under the scope of this project and will be required to abide by federal contracting guidelines.
- 4. Completed "Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form for Contractors & Grant Recipients" available on the SFPE Foundation [website](http://www.sfpe.org/foundation)**
 - a. All team members named in the proposal are required to complete a copy of this form.
 - b. Note: This form should be included at the end of the proposal document, but it does not count towards the six-page limit.



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We welcome applications from groups or individuals.

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

- *Team Qualifications (25%)*
- *Scientific Merit of Proposed Approach (25%)*
- *Ability to Meet Project Deadlines / Achievability (25%)*
- *Ability to Deliver within Budget / Project Value (25%)*

Deadline for Submittals: 11:59 pm ET on Monday, January 8, 2024.

Direct submissions and inquiries to Dr. Leslie Marshall, SFPE Foundation Director, at foundation@sfpe.org. No phone calls, please.

Contractor Selection

Proposals will be evaluated by SFPE Foundation Staff and the Project Advisory Panel based on the proposal elements listed above. The selected contractor will be required to abide by all applicable guidelines for federal award recipients and will be asked to complete additional forms to ensure compliance with federal, state, and local guidelines, as well as any policy and regulatory guidelines required by the SFPE Foundation.

Intellectual Property

The SFPE Foundation will retain the rights to the final deliverables and any tools, documents, or other materials produced under the scope of this project. The SFPE Foundation will utilize these items to the extent required by the terms and conditions of the SFPE Foundation's grant agreement with the funding agency, FEMA.