

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Criteria Bulletin Update Project
February 18, 2025

The National Park Service (NPS) and the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers (NCSHPO) seek the services of a cultural resource consultant to support the revision and reissuance of *National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Criteria Bulletin, formerly known as “Bulletin 15”).

Interested firms should submit a complete proposal and cost estimate (specified below) in response to this RFP to NCSHPO no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on Friday, March 21, 2025. Electronic copies of proposals may be directed to Mr. Nicholas Chamberlain, NCSHPO Special Projects Manager, at chamberlain@ncshpo.org.

Project Background

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the official Federal list of buildings, structures, objects, sites, and districts significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties have significance in the prehistory or history of their community, state, or the nation. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service on behalf of the Secretary of the Interior.

The National Register, as a program, has the responsibility to provide leadership in the preservation of historic properties and in the administration of the national preservation program (54 USC 300101(2)); and to contribute to the preservation of non-federally owned historic property and give maximum encouragement to organizations and individuals undertaking preservation by private means (54 USC 300101(4)).

Properties proposed for listing in the National Register are nominated by the public, professionals, and officials, by submitting through a nominating authority a completed National Register Registration Form (36 C.F.R. § 60.5). Properties proposed for listing are evaluated according to regulatory criteria of significance and integrity (36 C.F.R. § 60.4). National Register regulations direct the program to develop guidance for identifying, evaluating, documenting, and registering properties (id.) This guidance is primarily issued via National Register “Bulletins.” National Register Bulletin 15: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation (Criteria Bulletin) was developed to explain how the National Park Service applies these National Register criteria in evaluating the wide range of properties that may be significant in local, state, and national history. The Criteria Bulletin was first issued in 1990. Revisions were issued in 1991, 1995, and 1997.

In the decades since the Criteria Bulletin was last issued, misconceptions and misunderstandings about National Register criteria appear to have resulted in the exclusion of potentially historic properties. While the guidance in the Criteria Bulletin continues to be sound, application of this guidance by both preservation professionals and the public has been inconsistent and elaboration on certain issues—such as determining significance level, evaluating integrity, and counting resources—would better support the nomination of more of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. The Revised Criteria Bulletin is also anticipated to include enhanced readability and numerous additional images.

Scope of Work

The NPS has prepared a draft Revised Criteria Bulletin and the NPS and NCSHPO now seek a consultant to support the work of further revising, reformatting, and reissuing the Criteria Bulletin.

A. Project Tasks

1. NPS and NCHSPO shall provide to Consultant the draft Revised Criteria Bulletin.
2. In coordination with NPS and NCSHPO, Consultant shall further revise, copyedit, design, format, and publish the Criteria Bulletin.
3. Consultant shall support public outreach and government-to-government consultation.
 - a. All meetings shall be held virtually via Zoom.
 - b. NPS and NCSHPO shall lead all consultations and meetings.
 - c. Consultant shall provide the following support.
 - 1) Provide and manage webinar software, *e.g.*, Zoom.
 - 2) Serve as producer during webinars, *e.g.*, troubleshoot technical problems, manage participant interaction.
 - 3) Participate in post-webinars discussions with NPS and NCSHPO to review technical and substantive proceedings, and to make recommendations as appropriate.
 - d. The proposed schedule for government-to-government consultation and public outreach webinars (dates/times TBD) is as follows:

Government-to-Government Consultation = 4 TOTAL		
Party	Description	Count
Native American tribes, grouped by geographic regions	Each offered x1: Great Plains, Midwest, and Rocky Mountain regions tribes; Eastern, Eastern Oklahoma, and Southern Plains regions tribes Navajo, Southwest, and Western regions tribes; Alaska, Northwest, and Pacific regions tribes	2
Alaska Native Corporations	1 webinar	1
Native Hawaiian Organizations	1 webinar	1
Public Outreach = 2 TOTAL		
Party	Description	Count
SHPOs, THPOs, FPOs	NE, SE, Midwest Mountain/West Coast	1
General public	Open to all, from professionals to non-professionals	1

4. Consultant shall manage all comments.
All comments will be consolidated in the NPS system “Planning, Environment & Public Comment” (PEPC).
 - a. Consultant shall compile, review, analyze, and discuss with NPS and NCSHPO all comments collected through consultation and outreach, correspondence (*e.g.*, email, letter) and PEPC. This bulletin update effort is expected to generate a large quantity of comments, and will require the ability to read, interpret, and sort comments related to National Register criteria and the National Register listing process.
 - b. Consultant shall develop and produce a list of proposed recommendations based on comments, including but not limited to the potential for both new and revised content, reorganization of chapters, etc.
5. Consultant shall produce the publication.
 - a. Consultant shall edit for readability and advise NPS and NCSHPO on creating a final text that can generally be read and understood by people who are not professionals in historic preservation.
 - b. Consultant shall create a distinctive design for the Criteria Bulletin.
 - 1) The Criteria Bulletin’s design shall be based on the design of the recently issued [*National Register Bulletin: Identifying, Evaluating, And Documenting Traditional Cultural Places*](#).
 - 2) The Criteria Bulletin’s design shall reflect the gravitas and authority expected of an official document of the NPS, yet be a full-color, visually engaging and graphically legible/readable document.
 - 3) Consultant shall not proceed to format and layout until receiving written approval from NPS and NCSHPO of the design.
 - c. Consultant shall format and layout all text and images.
 - 1) Consultant shall copyedit all text, including image captions.
 - 2) Consultant shall ensure the bulletins are compliant with the United States Workforce Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (508 compliance).
 - 3) Consultant shall not proceed to production until receiving written approval from NPS of the format and layout.
 - d. Consultant shall produce both hard copy and electronic versions of the bulletins.
 - 1) Consultant shall produce a 508 compliant electronic version of the bulletins in PDF format.
 - 2) Consultant shall produce 800 full-color perfect-bound hard copies, delivered to the NPS at the Stewart Udall Building, 1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 2355, Washington, DC 20240.

B. Project Schedule

1. Maximum 18 months from award of contract by NCSHPO to Consultant.

Required Consultant Qualifications

The consultant shall be a cultural resources management (CRM) firm, organization, or team with demonstrated experience in preparing successful National Register nominations and successful guidance documents; providing logistical support for government-to-government consultation and stakeholders meetings; managing comments, including reviewing, analyzing, evaluating, and topically grouping comments; and producing an authoritative cultural resources document for wide distribution.

The Principal Investigator, at minimum, shall meet the following qualification requirements:

- 1) Demonstrated experience applying National Register Criteria for Evaluation.
- 2) Demonstrated knowledge of the National Register nomination process.

The individual designated as the Principal Investigator may not change during the project without prior written approval of NPS and NCSHPO.

Proposal Submissions

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

- 1) Name and qualifications of Principal Investigator and proposed staff, including education and experience.
- 2) Specific responsibilities of team members for this project.
- 3) Team structure, including reporting and approval chain.
- 4) Information on projects of a similar nature completed by the consultant in the past five (5) years. Include specific dates and types of services provided, and highlight successes in meeting schedules, budgets, and deadlines.
- 5) A list of references (at least three (3), but not more than five (5)) that may be contacted.
- 6) 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.
- 7) 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 or supply costs.
- 8) A proposed project schedule.

All proposals must be received **no later than** 5:00 p.m. EST on the date specified at the top of this announcement. They should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the consultant's qualifications and capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this RFP. Proposals may be submitted via email in MS Word or PDF format.

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

Please Note: It is expected that the consultant will complete this project with a budget of \$105,000 to \$135,000. Project proposals should total within this dollar range.

Selection Criteria

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

- Responsiveness of the proposal to the project's purpose and scope of work.
- Qualifications of Principal Investigator and other key personnel.
- Knowledge of the National Register process and guidance documents.
- Experience providing logistical support for tribal consultations and stakeholder meetings.
- Experience producing professional, engaging publications.
- Ability to meet deadlines and successfully complete contracts of this type.
- Past performance and references.
- Proposed project schedule and budget.

NCSHPO encourages minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms to submit a proposal.

Terms and Conditions

- A. NCSHPO reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal.
- B. NCSHPO reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted, and to request additional information from any consultant.
- C. NCSHPO and NPS shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by consultants in preparing, submitting, or presenting its response to this RFP.
- D. All completed documents must fully comply with Section 508 accessibility standards (see <https://www.section508.gov/create> for electronic documents).
- E. 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.
- F. 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 Nicholas Chamberlain, NCSHPO Special Projects Manager, at chamberlain@ncshpo.org.

END