

Request for Proposals (RFP) for Executive Search Firm

Release Date: December 1, 2020

Due Date: January 4, 2021

Riverkeeper seeks to retain a consultant, firm or organization to assist the board and staff to recruit and hire the organization's next president. This RFP outlines the expectations and timeline for the scope of work. The selected firm will possess capacity and competencies on a full range of services, including experience with conducting successful executive searches for similar-sized nonprofit organizations and implementing equitable and inclusive recruiting and hiring processes. We look forward to working with the firm to attract a qualified and diverse set of candidates to hire our next president to lead Riverkeeper's work.

Background on [Riverkeeper](#):

For more than 50 years, Riverkeeper has sought to protect and restore the Hudson River from source to sea and safeguard drinking water supplies, through advocacy rooted in community partnerships, science and law.

Riverkeeper's goal is to ensure Hudson River, its tributaries and watershed, and the New York City drinking watershed are restored to ecological health and balance; free-flowing, resilient, and teeming with life; reliable sources of safe, clean drinking water; recovered from historic and inequitable environmental harms; safe and accessible for swimming, fishing, boating and other recreational activities; and valued and stewarded by all.

RFP Selection Process Timeline:

Proposals are due January 4, 2021 at 5pm EST, with a preferred start date of February 1, 2021.

December 1, 2020: RFP Released

January 5, 2021: Applications Due

January 6-8, 2021: First Review

January 11-15, 2021: Interviews

January 19-22, 2021: Final firm selected and awarded

February 1, 2021: Proposed start date

Scope of Work

The selected firm will:

- Work in close coordination with Riverkeeper's Presidential Search Committee, an ad-hoc committee of board and staff charged with supporting the search;
- Perform both a New York-centric and nationwide search to identify candidates with deep knowledge of local issues to serve as the next president of Riverkeeper;
- Provide guidance in structuring the recruitment and hiring process and timeline;
- Develop a recruitment plan, screen, and list potential candidates;
- Prepare client for interviews; and
- Support the process of final negotiations that result in an accepted offer letter.

A successful search is one that ends in the recruitment of a candidate(s) that effectively meets all the job requirements and qualifications, and which receives approval for hire from the Riverkeeper Board of Directors. The end of engagement will be marked by a signed offer letter. The Riverkeeper Board of Directors are hopeful this will occur no later than April 2021.

If the process does not result in a signed offer, Riverkeeper will work with the firm to negotiate possible extensions and/or adjustments to the process to identify a wider pool of candidates that results in a successful hire.

Presidential Search Committee

The executive search firm will report to the Board Chair, Ernest Tollerson, or designee, and will work in close coordination with the Presidential Search Committee, an ad-hoc group of board and staff providing support to the search process. The search firm and the Presidential Search Committee will work collaboratively to develop an inclusive process that includes regular and consistent communication with staff members and other key stakeholders. The Presidential Search Committee will make a final recommendation of hire to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will then make the final hiring decision.

RFP Submission Requirements

Proposals should be no more than ten (10) pages, not including references, and cover the following:

1. Organization Description: Brief history and summary of your firm and expertise.
2. Recruitment Approach: Please tell us about the process and methodology you would go through to find a successful candidate for Riverkeeper. Detail how you will accomplish the above scope of work, including a clear delineation of what we should expect the firm to be responsible for and what you expect from Riverkeeper. Include how you plan to engage and include staff and other board members not on the Presidential Search Committee as part of this process. Also include what networks you are able to access on behalf of this search.
3. Deliverables: How will we measure success throughout the process?
4. Proposed Timeline: Estimate the start and end dates for each phase of the search process.
5. Budget: Proposed cost along with narrative description of what is included in this cost. All costs from conception to completion should be included.
6. Experience and Unique Qualifications: Describe your firm's experience for similar requirements and the value that you brought to those assignments. (Overview of recent successful searches, description of your network/experience as it applies to this position, average time to close, and what would make you a unique partner for Riverkeeper.)
7. References: Provide at least three references (with at least 1 of each of the following):
 - a. A successful president/executive director search, where the president/executive director has been with the organization more than three years. Please provide contact information for both the president/executive director and, if possible, the board member contact with whom the firm contracted.

- b. A recent (within the past 12 months) president/executive director placement. Please provide contact information for the president/executive director as well as the board or staff contact with whom the firm worked most closely.

Proposals must be sent electronically in a single PDF file to: humanresources@riverkeeper.org, Subject Line: President Search RFP, by January 5, 2021, at 5:00pm EST. By submitting a proposal, the firm authorizes Riverkeeper to contact references to evaluate the firm's qualifications for this project.

Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following key criteria:

- Performance capability—the extent to which the proposal demonstrates the firm's ability to provide the depth and breadth of experience, skills, knowledge and creativity generally required by this project.
- Understanding of and commitment to Riverkeeper's mission, values, programs and strategic objectives.
- Demonstrated experience with similar-sized nonprofit organizations.
- Completeness and quality of response, including clear deliverables and reasonable approach.
- Proposed cost and timeline.
- References.

Top-rated candidates will be invited to interview with the Presidential Search Committee.

The selected consultant and Riverkeeper will then mutually discuss and refine the scope of work for the project and shall negotiate final conditions, compensation, and performance schedule for the subsequent contract to be executed.