REINVESTMENT FUND

HEALTHY FOOD FINANCING INITIATIVE
Request for Qualifications for Professional Services

PROGRAM SUMMARY

The purpose of America's Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) is to support food supply chain resiliency, improve access to healthy foods in underserved areas, create and preserve quality jobs, and revitalize low-income communities. HFFI provides financial and technical assistance, either directly or through other partners and intermediaries, to fresh, healthy food retailers and food retail supply chain enterprises to overcome the higher costs and initial barriers to entry in underserved areas.

Equitable access to healthy food is enabled by a food system where enterprises across the food supply chain can thrive and deliver fresh, healthy, and affordable products. HFFI aims to build a more equitable food system that supports the health and economic vibrancy of all Americans.

As the NFM, Reinvestment Fund has awarded over $41 million directly to Food Retail and Food Enterprise projects in 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico. Additionally, over $40 million has been awarded to support new and existing regional, state, and local food financing programs through the HFFI Local and Regional Healthy Food Financing Partnerships Program.
Authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, America's Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI) is administered by Reinvestment Fund on behalf of USDA Rural Development.

To further the goals of the HFFI program, technical assistance (TA) is available through the HFFI Food Access and Retail Expansion Fund (HFFI FARE Fund) for eligible fresh, healthy food retailers and enterprises to overcome the higher costs and initial barriers to entry in underserved areas. TA will be offered to selected applicants where resources would help clarify and support the development of a healthy food access project in an underserved area.

To learn more about the Healthy Food Financing Initiative at Reinvestment Fund, visit www.investinginfood.com.

SERVICES NEEDED

To support the goals of this project, Reinvestment Fund is seeking expert professional services providers to serve as consultants ("consultants") to provide technical assistance and industry-specific consulting services to HFFI TA Grant Recipients ("TA Recipients"). Consultants may be either individuals or organizations.

Services may include (but are not limited to):

- Providing industry-specific advisory and coaching services including:
    - Training for business administration and management, pro forma and financial counseling
    - Governance support and project management training
    - Identifying problems or barriers to a community or enterprise successfully increasing access to healthy food for underserved areas, and recommending solutions
    - Supporting larger capitalization efforts for a healthy food retail project, including growth and sustainability planning
    - Upstream and downstream food supply chain management training, including sourcing and distribution logistics
- Providing contractual, professional services including:
    - Developing strategic and business plans and/or assessing existing plans, including but not limited to for-profit, non-profit, cooperative, and public-private partnership models
    - Providing market research or feasibility analysis for a healthy food retail project
    - Assistance with site identification, inventory identification and sourcing, staffing, nutrition programs, and other implementation efforts for a healthy food retail project
    - Providing services that support acquisition and/or pre-construction/pre-development of land and buildings such as legal support, fees and environmental/energy assessments, architectural or site plans, building designs, or store layouts
    - Assessing a project's impacts and its business case
    - Developing community engagement, participatory research, and/or marketing and outreach strategies and/or leading those efforts
- Resource development for broader field-building and education among HFFI constituencies including trainings, convenings, webinars, materials and toolkits, market research, and promoting peer learning and best practices in grocery retail and resilient food systems

Reinvestment Fund seeks professionals and firms with general business planning expertise as well as specialized expertise in the above areas as it pertains to food retail, food retail supply chain, healthy food access, and food systems. Respondents to this solicitation do not need to be able to provide all listed services to be considered.

PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS

The program seeks to create and preserve quality jobs, and to revitalize low-income communities by providing technical assistance and capital to eligible healthy food projects in hard to reach, underserved areas.

This Request for Qualifications will prioritize providers who can demonstrate expertise and experience in providing services to priority populations and underserved areas. These populations and underserved areas include:

- Communities experiencing (I) limited access to affordable, Healthy Foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, in grocery retail stores or farmer-to-consumer direct markets; and (II) a high rate of hunger or food insecurity or a high poverty rate due to historical, systemic, and economic factors
- Urban, rural, and Native tribal communities
- Women and/or BIPOC led or owned businesses and entrepreneurs

SCHEDULE

Respondents will be notified within 2-3 weeks from submission about their selection as a technical assistance provider for the HFFI FARE Fund TA network.

If selected to become part of the HFFI FARE Fund TA network, HFFI FARE Fund TA recipients will have the opportunity to select you as a TA provider.

If selected by a TA recipient, the expected duration of each contract is up to 12 months with the possibility for variation based on the needs of the HFFI program and HFFI projects. Multiple projects may be assigned to Consultants. The schedule is subject to change with prior notice given to Consultants.

DISCLAIMERS

Responding to this solicitation is not a guarantee of a contract. This RFQ is merely an invitation for submission of proposals and does not legally obligate Reinvestment Fund to accept any of the submitted proposals in whole or in part. Reinvestment Fund reserves the right to negotiate with any or all firms with respect to price, cost, and/or scope of services. Only the execution of a written contract shall obligate Reinvestment Fund in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such contract. Names of submitting organizations and individuals, as well as application content and any attachments, are kept confidential, except to those Reinvestment Fund staff involved in the review process.

ELIGIBILITY

Individuals and organizations are invited to apply for this opportunity. Organizations responding will need to identify specific individuals in their organization that will conduct the work and include details of their qualifications. Subcontracts may be considered based on the needs of the TA Recipients. Any anticipated subcontractors should be included in the proposal response to this RFQ.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION

Please provide an overview of yourself or your organization, including:

Name (Self or Organization):
Employer Identification Number (EIN):
Address:
Email:
Phone Number:
Website:
Staffing plan (if organization, include names of all consulting staff; if utilizing subcontractors, please include names of all subcontractors):
Hourly consulting rate and/or estimated costs for scopes of services detailed in the demonstration of qualifications:
Geographies and/or communities in which you work:

DEMONSTRATION OF QUALIFICATIONS

Please provide a response to the following prompts. Organizational respondents should select responses representing each individual on their staffing plan.

1. Please select your areas of expertise relevant to the HFFI program. You can select all that apply. (please check or highlight)
   - ☐ Community Outreach and Engagement
   - ☐ General Strategic and/or Business Planning and/or Coaching
   - ☐ Equitable Food Systems (including food, health, and economic justice)
   - ☐ Indigenous Food Systems
   - ☐ Rural Food Systems
   - ☐ Financial Analysis and/or Financial Management (budgeting, forecasting and modeling, performance evaluation etc.)
   - ☐ Food Retail Business Management
   - ☐ Governance Systems
   - ☐ Cooperatives
   - ☐ Alternative Food Business Models (such as mobile markets, food hubs etc.)
   - ☐ Food Supply Chain Management and Logistics
   - ☐ Fundraising

☐ Marketing and/or Communications and Storytelling
☐ Community Development Finance (NMTC, capital stack development/integrated capital etc.)
☐ Information Management/Software/Data Management
☐ Site Acquisition
☐ Site Location Analysis and/or Feasibility Analysis
☐ Pre-Construction/Pre-Development
☐ Environmental Review
☐ Architectural, Site or Building Design
☐ Legal Counseling
☐ Other (please specify)

Describe your experience in delivering services in the above area(s) of expertise including scope, duration and outcomes of past projects. Include any experience working with grocery stores, other food retail projects including alternative and non-traditional retail models, nutrition programs, food systems and/or the food supply chain. Include examples of data sources, analytical tools, resources, and methodologies you typically use or have created in your work.

2. Please provide a sample of a deliverable you have provided for a previous client that demonstrates your work products in this area of expertise. This document will be kept confidential, except to those Reinvestment Fund staff involved in the review process. You may de-identify your client or other identifying information in the sample document.

3. List three references that can speak to your area of expertise and competence as an organizational consultant in the above identified areas.

4. Please include a copy of a current resume, bio, or curriculum vitae for all staff and subcontractors listed on the staffing plan.

Please submit responses through the form found on our website: https://www.investinginfood.com/ta-providers

Please send all questions to **TechnicalAssistance@investinginfood.com** with the subject line: Technical Assistance RFQ.