

Request for Proposals

Freelance Writers for New York State of Lake Associations, Inc.

Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program



The New York State Federation of Lake Associations, Inc. (NYSFOLA), a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation, is accepting sealed proposals from qualified freelance writers for a series of articles pertaining to the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP). CSLAP is a volunteer lake monitoring program run collaboratively, and under contract with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

The responding individuals, if ultimately selected, will be deemed to be independent contractors and not employees of either the New York State Federation of Lake Associations, Inc. or the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Proposals should be emailed to Nancy Mueller, CSLAP Coordinator at nysfolanancy@verizon.net with the subject line "Freelance Writer for the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program" and received no later than 5:00pm Eastern Daylight Savings Time on Friday May 16, 2025. Responses received after that time will not be accepted.

A confirmation email will be sent to all Respondents from NYSFOLA to verify that the submittal has reached the office.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

FREELANCE WRITERS FOR NEW YORK STATE FEDERATION OF LAKE ASSOCIATIONS, INC.

CITIZENS STATEWIDE LAKE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

SECTION 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 General Background

1. The New York State Federation of Lake Associations, Inc. is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit corporation comprised of member lake associations, individuals, and corporations. NYSFOLA's mission is to protect the water resources of New York state by assisting local organizations and individuals through public dialogue, education, information exchange and collaborative efforts. For nearly 40 years, NYSFOLA has contracted and partnered with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to coordinate the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program (CSLAP). CSLAP is the state's largest volunteer lake monitoring program with a planned 2025 program of 207 sampling sites on 194 lakes across the state and nearly 600 volunteers.
2. Additional information about the program can be found at <https://nysfola.org/what-is-cslap/#CSLAP> and <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/water-quality/sampling-activities>.
3. NYSFOLA seeks to receive proposals from qualified individuals to create high-quality articles highlighting the success of CSLAP, its member lake associations, lake partnerships, and lake management achievements. These articles are anticipated to be distributed through a variety of mechanisms including magazines, newsletters, and websites.
4. While other topics will be considered, we are particularly interested in articles that highlight:
 - CSLAP's role in providing credible data to state agencies, local governments, consultants, researchers, and lake associations.
 - The efforts of CSLAP volunteers to engage and educate their local government leaders and fellow lake community members in ways that lead to meaningful improvements in cooperation and water quality.
 - The importance of CSLAP to communities engaged in local lake management and planning activities.
 - Lake association success stories in managing aquatic invasive species.
5. We are also interested in having an editorial review of the current [CSLAP Sampling Protocol](#).

SECTION 2. REQUIREMENTS

2.1 General Requirements

1. All respondents are bound by the deadline and location requirements of this RFP.
2. Respondents electing to respond to this RFP are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the proposals; demonstrations; interviews; preparation of responses to questions and requests for additional information; for contract discussions; for any costs incurred by the Respondent in response to this RFP and the Respondent, including all related parties, disclaims and voluntarily and knowingly waives any and all rights to reimbursement for any such costs.
3. Late proposals will not be considered.
4. NYSFOLA reserves the right to cancel or modify this RFP. There is no guarantee that NYSFOLA will place the required services under contract.

5. NYSFOLA reserves the right to investigate the qualifications of any Respondent under consideration including proposed subcontractors and parties otherwise related to the Respondent and require confirmation of information furnished by a Respondent or require additional evidence of experience and qualifications to provide the services or otherwise discharge the obligations required by the RFP.
6. All materials submitted with the response will become the property of NYSFOLA and DEC. No materials submitted will be returned to the Respondent.
7. NYSFOLA reserves the right to evaluate responses in terms of the best interest NYSFOLA and DEC, applying criteria in this RFP and any other criteria NYSFOLA, in its sole discretion, deems pertinent.
8. NYSFOLA reserves the right to accept more than one proposal for services, as may be determined to be in the best interest of NYSFOLA and DEC.
9. Any contract that may result from this RFP is subject to the approval of the NYSFOLA Board of Directors and is only effective upon their approval.
10. Any response may be withdrawn in writing prior to the date and time set for the receipt of responses.
11. The selected Respondent shall be required to carry a commercial general liability insurance policy with a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 during the term of the contract and for a period of two years after termination.
12. Bidders or proposers agree to abstain from offering or giving anything of monetary value to any member of the NYSFOLA Board of Directors, NYSFOLA staff, employees of DEC, and/or members of their immediate families.
13. All proposed bidders are encouraged to identify themselves with NYSFOLA so that they receive any important updates.

2.2 Information Provided by NYSFOLA

1. Respondents are solely responsible for conducting their own independent research, due diligence, or other work necessary for the preparation of responses, negotiation of contracts, and the subsequent delivery of services pursuant to any contract. Respondents are encouraged to review materials available at <https://nysfola.org/#CSLAP> and <https://dec.ny.gov/environmental-protection/water/water-quality/sampling-activities>

2.3 Questions and Addenda

1. All questions regarding this RFP shall be directed to Nancy Mueller, CSLAP Coordinator, (315)677-9987 or via email at nysfolanancy@verizon.net.
2. Any question submitted will be answered within 2 business days, and those replies will be available to all bidders.

2.4 Submittal of Responses

1. Responses must be received by NYSFOLA by 5:00pm Eastern Daylight Time on Friday May 16, 2025. Responses received after that time will not be accepted. The response shall be emailed to Nancy Mueller at nysfolanancy@verizon.net with the subject line "Freelance Writer for the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program".

2. Responses shall not be open for public inspection.
3. Respondents should include a proposed price per article. Articles are anticipated to be in the range of 1000-1500 words.
4. After the opening of responses, a Respondent may not correct, modify, withdraw the price or any other provision of its response in a manner prejudicial to the interests of NYSFOLA or fair competition. NYSFOLA may waive minor informalities or allow the Respondent to correct them.

2.5 Respondent's Responsibilities

1. At the time of the opening of the response, it will be presumed that each Respondent has read and is thoroughly familiar with the Scope of Work to be performed under this RFP.
2. The Respondent agrees that, if a contract is executed with NYSFOLA, the Respondent shall make no claim against NYSFOLA because of any estimate or statement made by any employees or agents of NYSFOLA or the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) which may prove to be erroneous in any respect.

2.6 Basis of Procurement

1. This RFP and any contact(s) that may result shall be in accordance with the appropriate laws, ordinances, and regulations of the United States Government and the State of New York.

SECTION 3. SCOPE OF WORK

3.1 Primary Duties

1. Articles (website, newsletter, magazine)
 - Must be written in Associated Press (AP) style.
 - Must be between 1-5 pages, with one-inch margins, Times New Roman 11 pt. font, single or 1.15 spacing.
 - Must be submitted as a Word or other text document compatible with Microsoft Word.
 - Any individual assignments must be accepted or declined within 24 hours.
 - Contractor has four weeks from time assignment is accepted to final product. To accept an article, a plan for placement will be required.
 - The Final product(s) must be submitted to Nancy Mueller, NYSFOLA CSLAP Coordinator.
 - If complications arise and an assignment is not able to be completed, the CSLAP Coordinator must be informed ASAP.
 - Payment will only be issued for completed assignments which will be acceptance of the article by NYSFOLA.
 - Freelances are responsible for completing all assignments using their own equipment.

SECTION 4. PROPOSAL

4.1 General Format

1. The Respondent proposals shall include, but not limited to, the following items:
 - A Resume outlining relevant experience. Resumes should be limited to no more than two (2) pages.
 - Brief reference list of other organizations including point of contact names, telephone numbers, and email addresses served by the individual for similar projects.
 - Three (3) writing samples.

SECTION 5. PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

5.1 Evaluation Criteria

1. Proposals shall be examined first for completeness, and any responses that are deemed incomplete in any material respect by NYSFOLA may not be given further consideration.
2. Proposals that in the sole judgement of NYSFOLA meet the qualification criteria will be evaluated by the NYSFOLA Board of Directors in consultation with the Citizens Statewide Lake Assessment Program Coordinator.
3. All responses will be evaluated based on the availability, professional expertise and the experience of the individual, cost of the proposed services, methods and procedures to be used, past performance, and any other criteria deemed pertinent by NYSFOLA in its sole discretion.

SECTION 6. SELECTINO AND CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

6.1 Selection

1. Once NYSFOLA has reviewed all responses, at its sole discretion, the NYSFOLA Board of Directors may choose a respondent to perform the designated services. In addition, NYSFOLA may interview any bidder prior to awarding the successful vendor.
2. A written notice from NYSFOLA will be sent to the successful vendor notifying them that they have been selected. Unsuccessful vendors will also be notified in writing.