

**Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife**

RFP No. DOFAW-UCF-FY27-001

ISSUE DATE: October 28, 2026

Request for Proposals for the
Working Group Facilitator and Implementation Planning Consultant
Shade and Fruit Trees for Schools Statewide Implementation Working Group

TO THE
Department of Land and Natural Resources
Division of Forestry and Wildlife
1151 Punchbowl Street, Room 325
Honolulu, HI 96813

**PROPOSALS SHALL BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA THE HlePRO
PROCUREMENT SYSTEM. PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MONDAY,
NOVEMBER 30, 2026, AT 2:00 PM HST, AS RECORDED BY THE DESIGNATED SYSTEM.**

Request for Proposals

Working Group Facilitator and Implementation Planning Consultant for the Shade and Fruit Trees for Schools Statewide Implementation Working Group

CONTRACT SUMMARY

Service area: State of Hawai'i (offerors shall describe proposed meeting, consultation, and travel arrangements)

Contract type: Consultant or consultant team serving as an independent contractor

Anticipated term: Approximately December 2026 through July 2027; final dates are subject to funding, contract execution, and written notice to proceed.

Maximum available compensation: \$60,000, inclusive of all applicable taxes and expenses.

Issuing agency: State of Hawai'i, Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program

Procurement contact: Heather McMillen heather.l.mcmillen@hawaii.gov

Proposal due date: **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2026, AT 2:00 PM HST**

1. BACKGROUND

The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR) and Hawai'i Department of Education (HIDOE) are working together to increase tree canopy and the benefits trees provide across Hawai'i's public school campuses.

The agencies currently collaborate through the federally funded **Shade Trees for Schools** project, a three-year initiative supporting campus tree planning, planting, establishment, stewardship, and education.

In 2026, the Hawai'i State Legislature adopted HCR 91, requesting that HIDOE and DLNR collaborate to establish a formal, long-term program to expand, equitably distribute, and sustain tree canopy across Hawai'i public schools statewide. To advance this direction, HIDOE and DLNR intend to convene a **Shade and Fruit Trees for Schools Statewide Implementation Working Group**, bringing together approximately 14-18 representatives from HIDOE, DLNR, schools, urban forestry and landscape professions, education, community organizations, and other relevant sectors.

The primary goal of the working group is to develop practical recommendations for transitioning from the current time-limited (grant-funded) pilot effort toward a durable statewide program with state support.

The Working Group will be advisory. Final decisions regarding agency policy, budgets, staffing, procurement, agreements, and implementation will remain with HIDOE and DLNR and other appropriate decision-making bodies.

DLNR seeks a qualified contractor to provide **independent planning, facilitation, research, coordination, synthesis, and report-development services** to support the Working Group.

2. PURPOSE OF THE CONTRACT

The purpose of this contract is to provide the professional facilitation and planning capacity needed for the Working Group to develop a credible, actionable, and broadly supported framework for a long-term statewide Shade Trees for Schools program.

The contractor will work closely with designated DLNR and HDOE staff and the Working Group co-chairs to:

- design and manage an effective collaborative planning process;
- prepare and facilitate Working Group meetings and focused working sessions;
- help participants work through complex cross-agency and operational questions;
- gather and synthesize relevant information;
- document decisions, areas of agreement, unresolved questions, and action items;
- coordinate targeted stakeholder and technical input;
- translate Working Group discussions into clear written products; and
- develop a final statewide implementation and resource plan for consideration by HDOE and DLNR leadership.

The contractor will facilitate and document the development of recommendations rather than independently determine agency policy or program direction.

3. CONTRACTOR QUALIFICATIONS

DLNR seeks an individual consultant, firm, or consultant team with demonstrated experience in collaborative planning and facilitation.

The successful proposer should demonstrate:

Required Qualifications

- Experience designing and facilitating collaborative planning processes involving multiple organizations or agencies.
- Experience facilitating groups with differing organizational responsibilities, perspectives, and levels of authority.
- Strong meeting design and facilitation skills, including consensus-building and management of complex discussions.
- Strong research, synthesis, analytical, and professional writing skills.
- Experience in translating complex discussions and technical information into clear recommendations and decision-ready documents.
- Experience managing multi-month projects with multiple meetings, participants, milestones, and deliverables.

- Ability to work effectively with Hawai'i public agencies and diverse community and professional stakeholders.
- Ability to complete the project within the required timeframe.

Desired Qualifications

Preference may be given to proposers demonstrating experience with one or more of the following:

- Hawai'i state or county government;
- public-sector strategic or implementation planning;
- cross-agency initiatives;
- education or public-school systems;
- facilities, operations, and maintenance divisions/ departments;
- urban forestry, green infrastructure, landscape planning, or climate resilience;
- community-based and 'āina-based organizations;
- culturally responsive facilitation in Hawai'i;
- statewide or neighbor-island engagement; and
- preparation of implementation plans, resource plans, or executive-level recommendations.

The contractor **does not need to be an arborist or urban forestry specialist**. DLNR, HIDO, Working Group members, and invited technical advisors will provide subject-matter expertise. However, familiarity with natural resources, sustainability, school facilities, or related planning issues is desirable.

4. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be concise and should include the following:

A. Cover Letter

Provide the offeror's legal business name, business address, primary contact information, and a brief statement of interest in the project. The cover letter shall be signed by a representative authorized to submit the proposal on behalf of the offeror and shall acknowledge acceptance of the RFP requirements and applicable contract conditions.

B. Understanding and Approach

Describe the proposer's approach to:

- collaborative process design;
- meeting facilitation;
- consensus-building;

- stakeholder engagement;
- research and information synthesis;
- development and refinement of recommendations; and
- preparation of final products.

C. Work Plan and Schedule

Provide a proposed work plan demonstrating how the scope and deliverables will be completed within the anticipated December 2026–July 2027 period. Include the proposed number and format of meetings, stakeholder consultations, review points, and the timing of key written products. The State is not prescribing a fixed number of meetings or consultations; offerors shall explain how their approach will achieve the required outcomes.

D. Qualifications and Experience

Describe relevant qualifications and provide examples of similar projects completed within approximately the past five years.

E. Project Team

Identify the individual(s) who will perform the work, their roles, relevant experience, and anticipated availability.

If subcontractors are proposed, identify their roles.

F. References

Provide contact information for three clients for whom the proposer has completed similar work.

G. Cost Proposal

Provide a firm-fixed, all-inclusive total price for the proposed services and completion of all required deliverables. The total price, including applicable taxes and expenses, shall not exceed \$60,000.

Show the proposed allocation of this price among major tasks or deliverables, identifying as applicable:

- professional fees;
- estimated hours and billing rates, if applicable;
- travel, if applicable;
- meeting expenses;
- subcontractor expenses; and
- any other anticipated direct or reimbursable expenses (all included within the fixed total price).

Identify all assumptions affecting the cost and the level of effort included in the proposal. Show any applicable general excise tax (GET) separately for informational purposes and include it in the firm-fixed total. No additional charges beyond the contract amount will be authorized without a duly executed amendment.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criterion	Points
Understanding of the project and quality of proposed approach	25
Collaborative planning and facilitation experience	20
Qualifications and relevant experience of proposed personnel	15
Experience with Hawai'i public agencies, education, natural resources, community-based planning, or comparable multi-stakeholder settings	10
Quality and feasibility of proposed work plan and schedule	10
Past performance and references on projects of similar scope	10
Price	10
Total	100

Price will be evaluated in accordance with HAR §3-122-52(d), with a maximum of 10 points allocated to price.

Hawai'i offeror preference: In accordance with HRS §103D-303(j), a five percent (5%) Hawai'i Offeror Preference is available for evaluation purposes, subject to applicable statutory requirements. Offerors wishing to claim this preference must submit a completed Form SPO-081 with their proposal by the submission deadline. The preference does not reduce the actual contract price. The State will verify eligibility before awarding a contract to an offeror receiving the preference.

Interviews and Discussions: DLNR may request clarifications or conduct interviews and discussions with priority-listed offerors in accordance with applicable procurement rules. The State may also make an award based on the proposals received without conducting discussions.

6. SUBMISSION

Proposals shall be submitted electronically through the HlePRO eProcurement System no later than **MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2026, AT 2:00 PM HST**. Proposals submitted outside the designated submission method will not be accepted.

Anticipated notice of award: December 2026. Anticipated contract start: December 2026, subject to funding availability, contract execution, and written notice to proceed.

Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted through HlePRO by **FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2026, AT 2:00 PM HST**. Responses and any material clarifications or changes will be issued to all prospective offerors by solicitation addendum, targeted for FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2026. The State may extend the proposal due date by addendum if additional preparation time is necessary.

Questions shall be directed to:

Heather McMillen

Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program

Division of Forestry and Wildlife

Department of Land and Natural Resources

heather.l.mcmillen@hawaii.gov

(808) 286-7218

7. PROPOSAL AS PART OF THE AGREEMENT - This RFP, its addenda, and all or part of the successful proposal may be incorporated into the resulting written agreement, subject to the agreement terms and applicable State General Conditions.

8. PROTEST - Protests shall be filed in writing in accordance with HRS §103D-701 and HAR chapter 3-126. A protest based on the content of this RFP must be submitted prior to the time set for receipt of proposals. A protest concerning an award or proposed award must be submitted within five (5) working days after the posting of the notice of award. The State will post the notice of award on the Hawai'i Awards and Notices Data System (HANDS) or the authorized State procurement award system. Written protests shall be submitted to the Procurement Officer, Department of Land and Natural Resources, 1151 Punchbowl Street, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813.

9. PRICING - The firm-fixed total price shall include labor, materials, supplies, travel, meeting expenses, subcontractors, all applicable taxes (including GET), and all other costs required to perform the services and furnish the deliverables. An offeror may identify GET as a separate component, but it must be included in the total proposed and evaluated price. No additional expenses will be paid unless authorized through a duly executed written amendment.

10. ECONOMY OF PRESENTATION - Proposals shall be prepared in a straightforward and concise manner, in a format that is reasonably consistent and appropriate for the purpose.

Emphasis will be on completeness, clarity, and content. If the State requires additional information regarding any aspect of the Proposer's proposal, the information shall be provided within seven (7) business days.

CONFIDENTIAL OR PROPRIETARY INFORMATION - Offerors shall identify in writing any portions of their unpriced proposals containing trade secrets or other proprietary information for which confidential treatment is requested. Such information shall be clearly marked and readily separable from the nonconfidential portions of the proposal.

Designation of information as confidential does not guarantee nondisclosure. Requests for public inspection will be handled in accordance with HAR §3-122-58 and HRS Chapter 92F. Proposed prices shall not be considered confidential.

11. CANCELLATION OF RFP AND PROPOSAL REJECTION - The State reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part when it is determined to be in the best interest of the State, pursuant to sections 3-122-96 through 3-122-97, Hawai'i Administrative Rules. The State shall not be liable for any costs, expenses, loss of profits, or damages whatsoever incurred by the Proposer if this RFP is cancelled or a proposal is rejected.

12. AGREEMENT EXECUTION - The successful Proposer shall enter into a formal written agreement with the State, subject to the applicable State of Hawai'i General Conditions (Form AG-008). No proposal security, performance bond, or payment bond is required for this services solicitation. No work shall begin until the agreement is fully executed and the State has issued written authorization to proceed. Any extension or change must be approved and documented by a written contract amendment. Termination and other contractual remedies shall be governed by the executed agreement and applicable State General Conditions.

13. PAYMENT - Payment shall be made for completed and accepted services or deliverables in accordance with an approved payment schedule included in the executed agreement. The payment schedule may be based on the major tasks or deliverables identified in the successful proposal. The Contractor shall submit invoices describing the services or deliverables accepted by the State. No automatic advance payment is authorized upon contract initiation. Payments are subject to HRS §103-10, applicable laws, and the terms of the executed agreement.

14. AWARD - The award will be made to the responsible Offeror whose proposal is determined to provide the best value to the State based on price and the evaluation criteria in this RFP, in accordance with HRS §103D-303 and applicable procurement rules.

Hawai'i Compliance Express

Before contract award, the selected Offeror must provide current proof of compliance with the laws governing entities doing business in Hawai'i pursuant to HRS §103D-310(c). Offerors may provide a current Certificate of Vendor Compliance through Hawai'i Compliance Express (HCE) or acceptable equivalent certificates from the IRS, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA), and Hawai'i Department of Taxation (DoTAX), as applicable. Registration in HCE is not mandatory. For vendors using HCE, updated IRS documentation requirements apply under Procurement Circular 2026-12. The State will verify compliance before award.

Final Payment Requirements. Current vendor compliance must be verified before final payment in accordance with applicable State requirements. HCE or acceptable equivalent compliance certificates may be used.

15. NON-DISCRIMINATION - The Contractor shall comply with all applicable federal and State laws prohibiting discrimination against any person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, sex, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or arrest and court records in employment, any condition of employment with the Contractor, or participation in the benefits of any program or activity funded in whole or in part by the State.

16. ATTACHMENTS AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

The following materials may be provided to the selected contractor or included with the solicitation for reference:

- HR 83 (2026), adopted by the Hawai'i House of Representatives; related HCR 91 (2026)
- HIDOE-DLNR Shade Trees for Schools Memorandum of Agreement
- Shade Trees for Schools federal grant project description
- Shade Trees for Schools Statewide Implementation Working Group draft framework/charter
- Relevant existing project reports, campus information, and planning materials
- State of Hawai'i General Conditions (Form AG-008)
- Hawai'i Bidder/Offeror Preference Certification (Form SPO-081)