



Request for Proposals: Natural Areas College Internship Professional Development

In an effort to expand and support natural areas management and restoration in New York City, provide paid training opportunities for NYC residents interested in natural areas restoration, and build capacity for local environmental employers, the Natural Areas Conservancy (NAC) seeks a consultant to:

1. ***Review existing reports, curriculum, and surveys that summarize NAC's program priorities for professional development***, focused on job readiness and workplace skill building in the local environmental field to an early career audience.
2. ***Develop an environmental early career professional development curriculum*** that addresses those recommendations, focused on in person facilitation.

Introduction

Founded in 2012, the Natural Areas Conservancy (NAC) is a nonprofit organization devoted to restoring and conserving New York City's 20,000 acres of forests, wetlands, and grasslands. We believe that natural areas are vital to improving public health, providing New Yorkers with access to nature, and strengthening our communities. The NAC works in more than 50 parks, in partnership with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks), across the five boroughs and takes a science-based approach to improving coastal resilience and ensuring healthy forests.

Through our college internship and workforce fellowship program, we support local students from City University of New York (CUNY) to become future environmental leaders. Since 2016, we have trained over 100 young adults through our paid internship program focused on natural areas management. Our staff oversees student projects and trains interns in field botany, ecological data collection methods, natural areas restoration techniques, and community engagement strategies. In 2024, the NAC will be building on the success of our college internship program and pilot a workforce development program that advances our goals of caring for NYC's natural areas, supports NYC's environmental workforce eager to secure employment post graduation and post program, and builds capacity for local park conservancies.



Project Background & Scope of Work

While a majority of the NAC's internship programming is centered around field work, data collection and land stewardship, the need for early career professional development is crucial. Training the next generation of urban ecology professionals requires workplace skill building to equip them for careers in the environmental field. Students in our college internship program make up an intern cohort size of anywhere from 10 - 18 participants that work full time during the summer session and part-time in the spring and fall seasons. We seek to retain a consultant who will conduct the following:

- A professional development curriculum detailing learning objectives, timeline and example sessions including instructional methods and key topics that will be covered that will prepare participants for local careers in natural areas management. This professional development curriculum will serve as (1) the foundation for curriculum facilitation beginning in fall 2024 into summer 2025; and (3) highlight how this curriculum addresses the overall goals of the program and increasing candidate competitiveness for local environmental jobs.

We encourage the consultant to leverage NAC's existing internship programming and relationships with local organizational partners and NYC-based nonprofits.

Timeline & Deliverables

The NAC seeks to commence this project in July 2024 for the academic year of September 2024–August 2025. The selected consultant will be expected to complete and deliver the following items:

1. **Professional development curriculum** [July 2024] including rationale, objectives, curriculum outline, and delivery methods.
2. **Delivery of professional development sessions** [September 2024 - August 2025] following feedback opportunities with NAC staff, facilitating programming across sessions with the workforce fellowship program and summer internship program.

The proposed budget for this project should range between \$10,000 - \$15,000 for content creation and program delivery of approximately 50 hours of asynchronous learning curriculum over the course of the year.

Submission Requirements

Applicants should submit a digital copy of a proposal by **June 24th, 2024** that includes the components listed below. Expenses incurred by the respondents in replying to the RFP or interviewing with the Selection Committee are at the respondents' own expense.

- Description of project approach (no more than 3 pages), including the following:



- Methodology: Please describe your approach for completing a proposed curriculum.
- Detailed description of each deliverable.
- Please describe your philosophy for making this professional development curriculum meaningful and effective.
- Proposed timeline and fee schedule.
- An example of past work.
- Profiles of the proposed project team

Resources

<https://naturalareasnyc.org/internships/>

[NAC Fellowship Proposal](#)

[NAC Internship Program Guide](#)