



**AGRARIAN
TRUST**

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Request for Proposals:

**Agrarian Trust Seeks Legal Consultant to Support Collective &
Commons-based Agricultural Land Ownership**

RFP Issue Date: 8/29/24

RFP Submission Due Date: 9/22/24

RFP Administrator: Sarah Holdeman, Operations Manager, Agrarian Trust

Submit proposals via email as a PDF or Word to: office@agrariantrust.org

Request for Proposals (RFP): Agrarian Trust Seeks Legal Consultant to Support Collective & Commons-based Agricultural Land Ownership

I. Introduction:

Agrarian Trust requests proposals from qualified applicants for a 12-month, renewable, legal consulting services contract to work with our remote team on a multi-year project focused on collective and commons-based approaches to land and farm ownership.

About Agrarian Trust: Agrarian Trust catalyzes support for next-generation farmers by working with communities to acquire and steward land for equitable access, cultural reconnection, regenerative agriculture, and ecological restoration. For more information, visit www.agrariantrust.org

Agrarian Trust is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to expanding community ownership of farmland, developing legal tools, and fundraising to help communities hold land and lease to next-generation farmers on a long term, affordable basis. The Agrarian Commons is our flagship initiative, working with communities across the U.S. to acquire and steward farmland.

Agrarian Trust was recently awarded a 5-year federal grant from the USDA's Farm Service Agency through the new Increasing Land, Capital, and Market Access Program. We have active projects and multiple agreements in effect that can be drawn on for new projects.

Our grant-funded project seeks to create and strengthen land access with additional opportunities to focus on capital access and market access for use in agriculture on a mid-size national landscape. With our collaborators, we seek to secure long-term access and tenure and mitigate land loss. Many of our collaborating organizations are led by underserved farmers of color and are composed of multi-racial coalitions of community members.

II. Project Overview: This work primarily entails:

1. Assisting Agrarian Trust with developing legal approaches and rendering legal advice and counseling that will support our organization and collaborators.
2. Improving our ability to advance our mission of achieving secure, long-term land tenure for next-generation farmers.
3. Ensuring that we make the best use of public funds to advance our charitable purpose while promoting equity, transparency, accountability, effectiveness, and efficiency for the benefit both of Agrarian Trust, our stakeholders, and the public.

III. Scope of Work: The consultant is expected to perform the following tasks:

1. Advise on and develop legal documents for partner projects (e.g. bylaws, MOUs, farm leases, and real estate related agreements) with our team and collaborating organizations, many of which are small, state-based nonprofits located across the U.S.

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2. Attend monthly to bi-monthly meetings of up to 1-2 hours with our team and collaborators as well as maintain weekly email contact.
3. Create a network of attorneys to serve as local counsel for all of Agrarian Trust's projects. This will include educating, training and mentoring attorneys about collective ownership models for agricultural land and land access and tenure issues facing farmers.
4. Advise Agrarian Trust's staff and board on internal legal matters related to compliance for a major federal grant awarded to the organization (described below).

III. Minimum Qualifications:

1. Education: A Bachelor's degree and license to practice law in at least one state in the U.S.

2. Professional Experience required: Demonstrated relevant experience (min. 5 years) in any of the areas of real estate, business formation, nonprofit law, land use, agricultural law, and community land trusts. Previous experience drafting contracts, leases and MOUs. Excellent written and oral communication skills; Adaptable, with an ability to consult with stakeholders in a remote, collaborative, team-based environment. Strong desire to learn from community-based groups and contribute to a supportive learning environment. Willing to meet with a team largely located in an Eastern time zone in the morning or afternoon (8 am to 12 pm; 2 pm - 5 pm ET), and willing to meet with community-based groups across the US via video call on a monthly basis or as necessary.

3. Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities (these are desired, not necessarily required):

- Client contact working with nonprofits and/or agricultural organizations
- Experience working with and developing bylaws for nonprofit clients.
- Experience drafting and recording legal documents.
- Experience applying for 501c3 nonprofit tax status with the IRS.
- Knowledge of community land trusts and conservation land trusts.
- Knowledge of cooperatives, marketing associations, or other relevant collectively-owned and managed entities.
- Willing to join us to contribute to special webinars on relevant legal topics and/or at in-person events such as conferences to share legal knowledge with our stakeholders and the general public.

IV: References: Provide at least three professional references from clients who can attest to the consultant's expertise and successful project delivery.

V. Confidentiality Clause:

The information contained in this RFP and any subsequent discussions or materials provided by Agrarian Trust ("Disclosing Party") to the bidder or consultant ("Receiving Party") is confidential and proprietary. The Receiving Party agrees to maintain the confidentiality of all such information and not to disclose it to any third party without the prior written consent of the

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Disclosing Party. This obligation of confidentiality shall survive the expiration or termination of the RFP process. The Receiving Party shall only use the confidential information for the purpose of preparing its proposal in response to this RFP and for no other purpose.

VI. Conflict of Interest:

All Consultants interested in conducting business with Agrarian Trust must disclose any potential conflicts of interest in the Consultant's proposal in order to be eligible to be awarded a contract. Failure to disclose potential conflicts of interest shall result in disqualification.

VII. Insurance Requirements:

The selected Consultant(s) for this Project shall be required, prior to the execution of an Agreement, to furnish proof of insurance. The specific insurance types and limits depend on the Project and can be found in the Template Request for Proposals (RFP): Agrarian Trust Legal Consultant Services Agreement attached to this RFP (Attachment A). Consultant(s) shall be considered ineligible for the contract award if they are unable to provide the required insurance.

**For best consideration, apply by 09/22/2024 via email to: office@agrariantrust.org
Please use the subject line:
Agrarian Trust Legal Services RFP**

We look forward to receiving your proposals and collaborating on this important initiative to increase access to secure, affordable land tenure for farmers and ranchers.

Agrarian Trust complies with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations regarding nondiscrimination, equal opportunity, and affirmative action. All qualified applicants will receive consideration. Agrarian Trust is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all people and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental disability, protected veteran status, age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, creed, marital status, political affiliation, appearance, or on the basis of rights secured by the First Amendment, in all aspects of employment, contracting, and activities.