REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Tourism Sector Coordination / Sector Investment Coordinator

North State Jobs First Initiative

Issued by: Sierra Institute for Community and Environment

1. Program Background and Context

The California Jobs First initiative is a statewide effort to foster inclusive, sustainable, and climate-forward economic development. The North State Jobs First region encompasses 10 rural Northern California counties: Butte, Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, Siskiyou, Tehama, and Trinity.

Through a multi year planning process, the North State Jobs First Regional Collaborative identified priority sectors for the North State Jobs First region. Tourism emerged as one of these key sectors with untapped opportunity for regional economic development that bolsters climate resilient and socially inclusive economic growth. North State tourism sector coordination includes increasing access and regional economic benefit from the region's natural landscapes, outdoor recreation opportunities, cultural heritage, and small businesses, especially in natural resources and agriculture.

Sierra Institute for Community and Environment is soliciting proposals from qualified consultants or organizations to serve as the Tourism Sector Coordinator.

2. Purpose and Objectives

The objective of this contract is to secure coordination services and project development services to advance the North State Jobs First Tourism Sector. The Tourism Sector Coordinator will lead regional stakeholder engagement, identify and

catalog transformative tourism projects, provide technical assistance to project sponsors, align projects with state, federal, and philanthropic funding sources, and build cross-sector partnerships across the 10-county region.

3. Regional Tourism Sector Key Priority Strategies

The Tourism Sector Coordinator will align all work with the four primary strategies outlined in the North State Jobs First Regional Strategies, Tourism Sector.

- **Strategy T-1** Develop a regionwide network to strengthen and coordinate the marketing of the full diversity of visitor experiences to all demographics.
- **Strategy T-2** Connect, grow, and promote community-based businesses that together provide a full destination-based experience to visitors.
- **Strategy T-3** Develop ecology-based experiences to increase understanding, support, and stewardship for the North State's natural landscape, efforts to adapt to climate change, and reduce carbon emissions.
- **Strategy T-4** Build resilient tourism projects that integrate and celebrate the North State's rural landscape and culture.

4. Scope of Services

To advance the key priority strategies, the selected Tourism Sector Coordinator will perform the following core activities:

A. Stakeholder Convening and Regional Network Building

- Convene and facilitate regional and subregional Tourism sector working groups meetings across the 10 counties.
- Build collaborative partnerships with Tribal governments, local economic development entities, federal/state land management agencies, and small businesses.

B. Project Inventory and Cataloging

- Inventory existing and emerging tourism, outdoor recreation, and agritourism initiatives across the region.

- Catalog projects based on development readiness
- Assess project viability, economic impact, climate alignment, and community benefit potential.

C. Pre-Development Technical Assistance

- Provide or procure technical assistance (TA) for project sponsors in pre-development phases (e.g., feasibility studies, environmental assessments, site acquisition/design, permitting, financial planning).
- Assist project leads in building capacity, organizational structures, and regional collaboration

D. Grant Development & Funding Alignment

- Identify state, federal, regional, local, and philanthropic funding opportunities suitable for North State tourism initiatives.
- Assist conveners and project sponsors with grant writing, application preparation, and alignment with state planning documents

5. Eligibility and Desired Qualifications

Desired Qualifications:

- **Industry Expertise:** Demonstrated expertise in tourism, outdoor recreation, destination marketing, or rural economic development within Northern California.
- **Regional Knowledge:** Experience working with the geography, communities, and stakeholders of the North State's 10 counties. Preference will be given to applications from within the 10 county region.
- **Technical Capability:** Proven track record of grant writing, pre-development technical assistance, and project management.
- **Inclusive Engagement:** Experience engaging rural small businesses, economic development entities, regional planners and disinvested communities in economic planning.

- **Collaboration and Flexibility**: A successful applicant will collaborate with regional conveners and the North State tourism community to amplify, align and foster strategic thinking.

6. Timeline

The contract's duration will be through June 2027. Specific timeline for deliverables will be identified upon execution of a contract. An award will be made within two to four weeks of receiving proposal submissions.

7. Proposal Submission Requirements

Interested applicants must submit a concise proposal containing the following sections:

1. **Cover Page & Organization Profile:** Basic contact details, organizational background, summary of qualifications, and primary contacts.
2. **Project Approach:** Brief narrative on how the applicants will execute the Scope of Services, engage the region, and advance Strategies T-1 through T-4.
3. **Relevant Experience & Past Work:** Summary of relevant past projects demonstrating expertise in rural tourism, technical assistance, collaborative planning, and grant acquisition.
4. **Staffing Plan & Key Personnel:** Resumes/bios of the project manager and key personnel assigned to the contract.
5. **Cost Proposal & Budget:** hourly rate, estimated hours per task, and line-item budget breakdown.
6. **References:** Contact information for three professional references from relevant regional projects.

8. Selection Schedule and Timeline

Key Milestone	Schedule / Deadline
Proposal Submission Deadline	November 30, 2026

9. Inquiries and Submissions

For questions and proposal submissions, please contact Sierra Institute for Community and Environment.

- **Primary Contact:** Zoe Watson
- **Email Contact:** zwatson@sierrainstitute.us
- **Final Submission Deadline:** November 30, 2026.