



# Request for Proposal

Institute for Sustainable Communities  
China Program Strategy Development Consultant

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**ISSUED BY:**

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**REPRESENTATIVE:**

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# Introduction

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC), founded in 1991, is an international climate organization with a mission to create equitable climate change solutions around the world. We do this by forming collaborative, people-focused partnerships that support communities disproportionately impacted by the global climate crisis. For more than 30 years, ISC has utilized a unique, bottom-up approach to ensure solutions emerge from within communities, rather than being imposed from the outside. Our projects focus on disinvested communities throughout the world, with specific attention paid to the impact systemic racism and gender inequity have had in communities, workforces, and industrial sectors as they move toward a just transition.

Through a deep understanding of and commitment to communities that are the least likely to cause global climate change yet face the highest impacts, ISC develops creative and inclusive solutions, demonstrated in our work in the U.S. and across Asia in China, India, the Mekong, and Bangladesh. We seek resiliency for our partners and the communities in which they lead. We actively partner with frontline organizations, subnational governments, and the private sector to co-create programs that support disinvested communities, women, and people experiencing poverty who comprise the global majority. ISC remains cognizant of communities' varying needs, and we tailor our approach to support those needs. We believe equity and inclusion are fundamental to building healthy, prosperous, and peaceful communities and are committed to furthering equitable climate action. Learn more at [sustain.org](https://sustain.org).



## Background & Project Description

ISC has had a presence in China for almost twenty years. We've achieved significant impact in greening supply chains and city decarbonization. Our once-thriving programs have been put on pause due to funding obstacles. Therefore, ISC has been working diligently to put the human capital, external expertise, and resources in place to reinvigorate our programs in China. The objectives of this project are to outline a thriving China program for the next three to five years. This includes identifying the personnel requirements of supportive functions, such as admin, comms, and development, and

building a program design that encompasses the three programmatic themes of advancing sustainable supply chains, building climate resilience, and accelerating equitable city decarbonization roadmaps. This endeavor aligns seamlessly with ISC's long-standing dedication to climate resilience for communities that have been historically disinvested and its commitment to driving equitable climate solutions. Historically, ISC has made significant strides in these domains, and this project is a continuation of that legacy, tailored specifically to the unique environmental and economic landscapes of China.



## Project Scope

Bidders will address the following key deliverables as part of their scope of work. We expect the successful bidder to:

1. Conduct a landscape analysis of organizations in China doing similar climate-related work, noting those with similar stakeholders (e.g. supply chains, communities, and cities), and identify ISC's niche.
2. Develop a strategy for business development that includes earned revenue and matching funding from diverse funders.
3. Identify the capacity needed to build a robust team, including development, communications, and administrative functions to support a thriving China program.
4. Assess and create a list of potential partners (e.g., financial institutions, universities, industry associations, other NGOs).
5. Prepare a budget plan detailing the allocation of funds, including consultancy fees and internal capacity building.
6. Building the architecture of each program theme that can be achieved in three to five years, including specific strategies, expected outcomes, and year-one activities.
7. Within the supply chain program theme, conduct a competitive analysis on organizations training the supply chains of Chinese companies, modes used (e.g. apps, AI), and identify potential partnerships with financial institutions.
8. Complete a three to five-year implementation plan, with periodic reviews to ensure alignment with the organization's three-year strategic plan.

Please note, that this list is not meant to be exhaustive but a highlight of the steps we believe are most important to this work. Please include any additional steps or priorities you normally undertake.



## RFP & Project Timelines

The Request for Proposal timeline is as follows:

Request for Proposal Issuance	January 29
RFP Deadline	March 1
Selection of Top Bidders	March 6
Interviews with Top 2-3 Finalists	March 11-13
Contract Award / Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders	March 14
Anticipated Project Start Date	April 1

ISC anticipates the timeline for project completion being between 3 to 6 months. **Please propose a timeline for the scope of work in your submission.**



## Budget

ISC's budget for the project is \$25,000.



# Submission Guidelines & Requirements

The selected firm or individual will:

1. Has experience working with NGOs in China, preferably in corporate supply chains, with communities, and/or cities.
2. Have demonstrated success helping organizations build programs in China.
3. Have expertise working with organizations to globalize equity-centered values and culture across their international operations; experience working in both the U.S. and Asia contexts is a plus.
4. Hold Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as central to their core values.
5. Ability to complete the scope of the project from April 2024 to June 2024.

Interested firms or individuals must provide the following information:

1. Qualifications demonstrating they can perform the requested activities.
2. A scope of work inclusive of the stated goals, activities, and deliverables along with the proposed timeline.
3. An initial cost estimate.
4. A representative sample of 3-4 similar clients that we may contact for reference.

**Deadline for Submission: February 12, 2024**

**To submit your proposal:** Interested consultants should submit the requested information via email to **Nidhi Shashidhara** at **NShashidhara@sustain.org**, with RFP - China Program Strategy Development Consultant Submission in the subject line, by **5 pm ET on March 1, 2024**.



## Evaluation Factors

ISC will rate proposals based on the following factors:

1. Responsiveness to the requirements outlined in this Request for Proposal.
2. Relevant past performance/experience.
3. Samples of work.
4. Cost.
5. Expertise/experience of bidder and bidder's staff.