

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:  
COMMUNITY OUTREACH CONSULTING SERVICES  
MAPPING CHARLESTON'S BLACK BURIAL GROUNDS PROJECT**

I. Purpose

The Preservation Society of Charleston (PSC) is seeking proposals for a **Community Outreach Consultant** to support the **Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds Project** team in facilitating a heritage stakeholder and descendant community engagement process. Made possible by a National Park Service African American Civil Rights Grant, the goal of this project is to implement a community-led, open-source mapping initiative to produce a comprehensive inventory of Black burial grounds in the City of Charleston. The purpose of the outreach phase is to provide a platform for community members to shape the outcomes of this mapping effort by sharing their knowledge of historically Black burial sites significant to their neighborhood and family histories.

II. Background & Project Information

The PSC has been awarded an African American Civil Rights grant by the National Park Service in support of the Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds Project to produce a comprehensive inventory of Black burial grounds in the City of Charleston. The grant application was bolstered by letters of support from the International African American Museum (IAAM) and the City of Charleston.

While the City passed its first cemetery protection ordinance in 2021, there is currently no inventory of burial sites to ensure development is planned to avoid willful or unknowing desecration. To address this issue, the project team will work with the community over the next two years to identify, research, and define the locations and boundaries of burial sites to inform a data layer, which will be integrated into the City's databases as a planning and preservation tool.

An initial community outreach phase will be conducted over the course of 2023 to inform subsequent mapping efforts. Working alongside the PSC and other project team personnel, the consultant will support the development and implementation of a community outreach plan. The goal of this phase is to cultivate a culture of transparency and inclusivity as this project gets underway, and to ensure Charleston's African American communities, to whom these resources belong, are not only invited to participate in this documentation and storytelling process, but to shape its outcomes.

III. Scope of Work

The consultant will dedicate approximately 20 hours per month over the course of 8 months to implement community outreach in three major phases outlined below. Throughout the project period, the consultant will communicate regularly with PSC staff to coordinate duties and participate in pre-scheduled monthly meetings to discuss progress and next steps. The PSC or consultant may also initiate additional meetings as tasks require.

Resources allocated toward this NPS grant-funded project will be at the disposal of the consultant in executing this scope of work. In addition to coordinating with PSC staff to advise on expenditures of grant funds, the consultant will have the opportunity to collaborate

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with a dedicated project intern managed by PSC staff, who will offer research and outreach support as needed.

1. Stakeholder Identification and Engagement (months 1-3)
  - a. Identify key stakeholders in geographically diverse areas of the city (specifically James Island/West Ashley/Johns Island, the Peninsula, and Cainhoy)
  - b. Meet one-on-one, or in small group settings (in-person or virtually as appropriate), with key stakeholders to share project information and learn about local burial grounds / descendant community contacts
  - c. Cultivate and maintain relationships with descendants identified through the community engagement process  
(The consultant will document efforts to contact and meet with community members and provide a biweekly log of new contacts and conversations)
  - d. Develop a database of burial ground locations and associated contacts to be used throughout the duration of the project (created in Microsoft Excel)
  - e. Share all cemetery locations and information with PSC staff on a rolling basis
  - f. Develop recommendations for hosting three larger engagement sessions in James Island/West Ashley/Johns Island, the Peninsula, and Cainhoy, to include specific advice on potential meeting locations and tailored outreach/communication strategies for each community
  
2. Listening Session Planning and Facilitation (months 4-8)
  - a. Coordinate with PSC staff, project intern(s), and local stakeholders to schedule and plan three listening sessions (West of the Ashley, East of the Cooper, peninsula)
  - b. Work in partnership with PSC staff to disseminate meeting information through multiple modes of communication, including but not limited to social media, local newspapers, and news networks, distributing flyers to churches and community centers near sites of interest, etc.
  - c. Develop informational content for listening sessions
  - d. Moderate Q&A conversations at listening sessions
  - e. Conduct follow-up communication with stakeholders following each session regarding next steps
  
3. Reporting and Recommendations (months 6-8)
  - a. Compile a summary report from each engagement session to include:
    - i. Attendee list and contact information
    - ii. Detailed notes on key cemetery locations to inform site identification
    - iii. Key takeaways from stakeholder input
    - iv. Community-specific recommendations for priority sites, methodology for implementing the mapping project, and long-term relationship management
  
4. Project Goals

The goals of the community outreach phase of the Mapping Charleston's Black Burial Grounds Project are to:

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1. Facilitate open dialogue about the future of African American burial grounds in the City of Charleston, inviting questions and concerns, as well as conversation about values, preferences, fears, and desires of descendant communities and residents
2. Educate the public about threats to African American cultural heritage this project aims to address, as well as the process and methodology behind the project
3. Invite the community's input and direct involvement in the cemetery documentation process
4. Equip descendant community members with the knowledge necessary to involve other members of their communities in the conversation
5. Provide technical assistance and training to those interested in conducting their own familial research and/or hosting their own community engagement sessions

V. Project Timeline & Deliverables

1. Timeline

The implementation of the community outreach phase will be facilitated by a consultant in collaboration with PSC Staff and partners, over a course of ten months beginning in February 2023 and ending in November 2023.

Release of RFP:	January 2023
Proposal Due Date:	March 17, 2023
Start Date:	April 2023
Listening Session 1:	Summer 2023
Listening Session 2:	Summer 2023
Listening Session 3:	Fall 2023
Reports and Recommendations Due Date:	November 17, 2023
Project Completion Date:	November 30, 2023

2. Deliverables

At the end of the contract, the consultant will deliver the following work products:

- a. **Comprehensive database of burial ground locations and associated contacts** compiled through the community outreach phase, created in Microsoft Excel
- b. **Three individual summary reports** from each listening session, including community-specific recommendations for priority cemetery sites, methodology for implementing the mapping project, and long-term relationship management
- c. **Final presentation** of priority cemetery sites and community-specific recommendations to PSC Staff and project partners

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All work products prepared under the terms of the contract are the property of PSC and shall be delivered at the end of the contract to PSC in a form or forms specified in this RFP, the contract, or as otherwise agreed in writing by the parties. Any publications of work by the consultant requires approval from PSC.

**VI. Professional Standards**

The consultant will be locally-based in the Charleston area and demonstrate relevant experience in community engagement activities. Candidates must possess strong, interpersonal communication and listening skills and be comfortable interfacing professionally with community members as a representative of the PSC. It is also imperative that the consultant exemplify self-awareness, respect, empathy, and flexibility in interfacing with community members, especially when dealing with sensitive subject matter pertaining to implications of race, gender, class, ethnicity, age, religion, and culture, etc. Any relevant experience in archival research methods, and/or familiarity with local history and land use policy is beneficial, but is not required. Applicants are encouraged to describe all relevant experience and skillsets in their proposal submission, outlined below.

**VII. Proposal Submission Requirements**

1. Resume
2. Cover letter
3. Two professional or academic references (name and contact only)
4. Written description of relevant experience, including sample work products if available
5. Written description of the proposed methodology to accomplish the tasks outlined in the scope of work, adhering to the stated project timeline
6. Detailed cost estimate for project scope

**VIII. Compensation**

Anticipated project costs are \$10,000 - 15,000 with consideration of additional funding as the project develops. Competitiveness of the budget will be considered as part of the proposal review process.

**IX. Submission Directions**

The deadline for submission of proposals is March 17, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. Proposals must be submitted electronically as a single PDF document and delivered via email to [accarroll@preservationsociety.org](mailto:accarroll@preservationsociety.org). If the Proposal consists of a large file size that cannot be attached in an email, delivery should be made through a web-based platform such as Dropbox. Submissions should be clearly marked "Community Outreach Consultant" in the subject line.