

Request for Proposals (RFP)
Documenting Multicultural Resources on Virginia's Battlefields
August 2023

INTRODUCTION

With the support of federal funding from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP), the American Battlefield Trust ("the Trust") is requesting proposals from qualified contractors to produce Cultural Resource Management case studies of resources associated with Native American and African American history and communities at three battlefields in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The principal investigator on a proposed team must meet the [Secretary of the Interior's Standards](#) and have a background in African American and/or Native American history and cultural resources.

A. COMPANY & PROJECT BACKGROUND

The American Battlefield Trust preserves our nation's hallowed battlegrounds and educates the public about what happened there and why it matters today. Thanks to contributions from more than 300,000 members and supporters nationwide, the Trust has preserved more than 57,000 acres of Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War battlefields at more than 150 sites in 24 states. The American Battlefield Trust is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization based in Washington, D.C.

With this interdisciplinary project, the Trust intends to 1) document resources associated with Native American and African American history and communities in three regions of Virginia that contain several battlefield landscapes and 2) encourage more expansive interpretation at battlefields both in the Commonwealth and across the nation. This study will make measurable progress to support two landmark legislative initiatives by the U.S. Congress and Virginia General Assembly, introduced as: 1) The Virginia Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Historic Preservation Fund and 2) The African American Burial Grounds Preservation Act (under consideration by the U.S. Congress). This project complements the Virginia Department of Historic Resources' ongoing efforts to prioritize the identification and protection of cultural and historic properties associated with Native American and African American communities across Virginia.

B. PROJECT DESCRIPTION & SCOPE OF WORK

The objective of this project is to document and map cultural resources associated with Native American and African American history and communities at three regions with Revolutionary War, Civil War, and/or War of 1812 battlefield landscapes in Virginia. Each case study should comprehensively examine the landscape to identify and assess resources and period(s) of significance, to include but not be limited to the battle period. Contractor activities should be conducted in a manner that meets the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archeology and Historic Preservation* and any applicable state and local standards and guidelines.

A qualified contractor will produce a Cultural Resource Management case-study of cultural resources at each battlefield region in coordination with the Trust, the ABPP, and key project stakeholders, including but not limited to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, Preservation Virginia, the African American Heritage Preservation Foundation, Virginia Civil War Trails, Virginia United Land Trusts, and participating Tribes with an interest in Virginia – including Tribal Historic Preservation Officers representing Federally Recognized Tribes.

The Trust’s experienced team of subject matter experts, GIS/mapping specialists, and government relations professionals will provide the contractor with support on defining battlefield boundaries, selecting technologies, and conducting stakeholder outreach.

The Trust and stakeholders will collaborate with the selected contractor to produce these case studies. The project will occur in several phases and include the following tasks:

- 1) Invite key stakeholders to help select and define the three Virginia battlefield regions to be used as case studies and solicit their guidance on developing the final report. Each region should include at least one battlefield but, ideally, several battlefields. Eligible battlefields and their boundaries are defined in the 2007 *Report to Congress on the Historic Preservation of Revolutionary War and War of 1812 Sites in the United States* and 1993 *Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation’s Civil War Battlefields* and are [mapped here](#). The Trust should also have [saved land](#) within the selected regions.
- 2) Introduce the project to state, Tribal, and community stakeholders and define each group’s participation in the project;
- 3) Conduct primary source research and ground reconnaissance (no ground disturbing activities) on the selected Virginia battlefield landscapes;
- 4) Host virtual listening sessions with invited stakeholders to 1) identify extant, lost, and missing resources on the selected Virginia battlefields and 2) solicit feedback from participants to improve focus areas and improve documentation of resources;
- 5) Prepare three Cultural Resource Management case studies, excluding any property that is part of a National Park Service unit or other Federal agency, to meet the Public Purpose requirements of Federal Financial Assistance and 31 U.S.C § 6304;
 - a. Incorporate findings available in GEO Data, Aerial Photographic Regression Imaging, and/or other advanced technological means to map resources identified at the three regions, using information from listening sessions, primary source research, and stakeholder recommendations;
- 6) Incorporate data into the Virginia Department of Historic Resource’s “[Virginia Cultural Resources Information System](#)” (“VCRIS”)

Interim deliverables may include:

- presentations for stakeholder meetings and listening sessions
- draft content and/or maps
- documentation of meetings and listening sessions, including agendas and feedback

The final deliverable is a Cultural Resource Management case study of resources associated with Native American and African American history and communities for each of the three selected battlefield regions. Each case study should include:

- an introduction and summary of findings
- historical overviews for all period of significance to include, but not be limited to, the battle period
- maps of relevant resources documented within the boundaries of the battlefield(s)
- a condition assessment of the identified resources
- preservation and interpretative recommendations, as applicable

To support people with disabilities, all deliverables must be compliant with Sections 504 and 508 of Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and include any enhancements necessary to ensure they are ADA-accessible.

C. INTERPRETIVE AND TECHNICAL APPROACH

This project will produce the key data and recommendations necessary to implement more expansive interpretation and preservation at these three Virginia battlefield regions. The findings of the Cultural Resource Management studies will be made accessible to the public and will be incorporated into VCRIS.

The Trust also intends this project to be a model for future investigation, preservation, and interpretation at battlefields nationwide. This project will help governments, non-profits, and the public better understand the resources associated with Native American and African American history held within battlefield lands. Preservation efforts have historically marginalized the documentation and protection of these resources, putting them at risk of being lost to development or neglect. This project, at minimum, acknowledges that:

- Battles took place upon historic tribal and ancestral lands, a point which is rarely acknowledged or interpreted on battlefield landscapes
- Indigenous and African American men and women made indelible contributions to all three wars in both support and combat roles, yet these contributions are under-represented in contemporary histories
- Battlefield lands contain undocumented cultural resources associated with Native American and African American history and communities, including cultural resources that provide insight into the lives and experiences of enslaved people in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries
- Communities founded by freedpeople during and after the Civil War, including sites of habitation, commerce, and burial, lie near or within battlefield boundaries

D. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The work is anticipated to begin in late 2023 and be completed within 18 - 24 months.

E. SELECTION CRITERIA

Overall, the selection will hinge on the Trust's judgment of best value, defined as most likely to produce high-quality results, not necessarily the fastest or the least costly.

The proposals will be reviewed and evaluated through a balanced consideration of the following factors:

- a) Specialized experience and technical competence, including a principal investigator that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards and has a background in African American and/or Native American history and cultural resources (required)
- b) Demonstrated understanding of the purpose and scope of the project
- c) Prior success in developing products in a cost-efficient and timely manner
- d) Prior success in completing projects requiring substantive stakeholder collaboration
- e) Prior success in incorporating external feedback into products
- f) Client references, relevant projects, company background, tentative timeline, and development approach
- g) The contractor's available resources and capacity to complete the project within the specified timeframe, and within a team environment.
- h) The contractor's ability to meet Section 508 requirements as determined by the description in the project proposal.
- i) Working within the identified budget for this contract of an amount not-to-exceed \$94,000.

F. SUBMISSION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Submissions should address the criteria above and adhere to the timeline and budget provided.

Please include the following in response to this RFP:

- Company background
- Why your agency is the right fit for this project
- Agency team information and people to be assigned to this work, including resumes or CVs
- At least three client references
- Examples of previous work that demonstrate relevant specialized experience and technical competence. Please share links, references, and/or case studies to demonstrate relevant prior experience.
- High-level production plan, timeline, and budget
- Disclosure of any conflicts of interest

Please submit your proposals via PDF to Reid Clark at rclark@battlefields.org no later than 5 PM ET on September 22, 2023. Proposals received after this date will not be considered. Additional questions regarding this Request for Proposals should also be directed to Jim Campi.

The American Battlefield Trust is committed to creating a diverse environment and is proud to be an equal opportunity employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, age, or veteran status.