ARCTIC EDUCATION FOUNDATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Fundraising Assessment, Development Plan and Capacity Building

Issued: November 2, 2026 | Proposals Due: December 4, 2026

AEF seeks a practical fundraising partner who can assess what exists today, build a realistic plan for growth, and leave staff with stronger tools, systems, and confidence to carry the work forward.

1. About Arctic Education Foundation

Arctic Education Foundation (AEF) is a nonprofit private foundation established to support Iñupiat students pursuing higher education, career and technical training, and cultural opportunities. AEF's mission is to provide support and assistance to students pursuing higher education and to empower Iñupiat students to achieve personal success and contribute effectively to their communities. Its core purpose is to empower present and future generations through education and student support.

AEF administers significant scholarship and education programs. As AEF plans for long-term financial sustainability, the Board has identified the need to strengthen and diversify fundraising beyond reliance on investment distributions and recurring support from key partners.

2. Project Background and Purpose

AEF currently raises funds through a mix of events, charitable gaming, individual and corporate donations, and limited grant activity. Existing efforts include the Ivalu Gala/Banquet, raffles and smaller events, giving campaigns, individual giving, and corporate sponsorships. AEF would like to expand these efforts while recognizing the capacity constraints of a small staff and the need to broaden its donor base.

AEF's strategic direction already calls for long-term, multi-year corporate giving, annual funding goals, an overall fundraising plan, stronger corporate sponsorships, and expanded partnerships. The Board is now seeking an experienced fundraising consultant to help translate that direction into an achievable development program.

The purpose of this engagement is not simply to produce a fundraising plan. AEF is seeking a consultant who will evaluate current fundraising efforts and organizational readiness, identify

the most promising fundraising opportunities, develop a prioritized and actionable plan, and work directly with AEF staff to build the internal capability needed to implement the plan successfully.

3. Scope of Services

AEF anticipates the work will include the following components. Respondents may recommend refinements to the approach based on their experience and assessment of AEF's needs.

a. Fundraising Assessment

- Review AEF's current fundraising activities, revenue sources, donor relationships, events, sponsorships, grant activity, communications, systems, staffing, and Board involvement.
- Assess organizational fundraising readiness, including staff capacity, roles and responsibilities, policies, donor data/CRM practices, prospect management, stewardship, communications, and reporting.
- Review available fundraising history and performance data to identify what is working, what is not, and where staff effort is producing the greatest return.
- Interview selected Board members, staff, ASRC representatives, current supporters, and/or other stakeholders as appropriate.
- Assess the potential for expanded individual giving, alumni giving, corporate and subsidiary support, sponsorships, grants, major gifts, planned giving, campaigns, and other appropriate revenue strategies.
- Identify barriers, risks, capacity gaps, and near-term opportunities for strengthening AEF's fundraising program.
- Provide a concise assessment of findings and recommendations to AEF staff and the Board.

b. Fundraising Development Plan

- Develop a practical multi-year fundraising plan aligned with AEF's mission, strategic priorities, staffing capacity, and financial sustainability goals.
- Recommend a diversified funding strategy and identify the fundraising channels AEF should prioritize, sequence, expand, reduce, or discontinue.
- Establish realistic annual fundraising goals and performance measures, including leading indicators that can be tracked before revenue is realized.
- Develop a prospect and donor-development approach, including cultivation, solicitation, stewardship, retention, and re-engagement strategies.
- Recommend approaches for corporate partnerships and multi-year commitments, including opportunities to engage ASRC subsidiaries and other regional and industry partners.

- Recommend an appropriate grants strategy, including the types of grants AEF should pursue directly or through partnerships.
- Clarify appropriate roles for staff, the Board, volunteers, and organizational partners in fundraising.
- Identify the systems, policies, tools, data, communications materials, and staffing structure needed to support implementation.
- Provide a phased implementation roadmap identifying priorities for the first 90 days, first year, and subsequent years.

c. Staff Training and Implementation Support

- Work alongside designated AEF staff to begin implementing priority elements of the fundraising plan.
- Provide practical training and coaching tailored to staff roles and experience. Topics may include prospect identification, donor cultivation, relationship management, making the ask, sponsorship development, grant readiness, stewardship, donor communications, and use of fundraising systems.
- Develop or refine practical tools and templates that staff can continue using after the engagement, such as prospect tracking tools, donor pipelines, contact plans, sponsorship materials, solicitation templates, stewardship calendars, and fundraising dashboards.
- Provide coaching on how to organize fundraising work within existing staff capacity and how to establish sustainable routines and accountability.
- As appropriate, support staff in preparing for or conducting initial donor, sponsor, or partner outreach so that training is applied to real opportunities.
- Provide recommendations for any longer-term staffing, consultant, technology, or resource needs.

4. Anticipated Deliverables

- Project kickoff and document/data request.
- Stakeholder interviews and organizational fundraising assessment.
- Written fundraising assessment summarizing strengths, gaps, opportunities, risks, and recommended priorities.
- Multi-year fundraising development plan with goals, strategies, responsibilities, measures, and implementation sequence.
- First-year implementation work plan and calendar.
- Recommended fundraising roles and responsibilities for staff and Board.
- Fundraising tools/templates appropriate to AEF's needs.
- Staff training and coaching sessions, with training materials that AEF may retain and reuse.
- Presentation of findings and recommendations to the AEF Board and/or designated leadership.

- A final transition session identifying immediate next steps and ongoing capacity-building needs.

5. Desired Consultant Qualifications

- Demonstrated experience assessing and building fundraising programs for nonprofit organizations, foundations, educational organizations, or similar mission-driven entities.
- Experience developing diversified fundraising strategies that include individual, corporate, foundation/grant, sponsorship, major-gift, and/or planned-giving approaches.
- Demonstrated ability to build organizational capacity, train staff, and translate fundraising strategy into practical day-to-day systems and behaviors.
- Experience working with Boards and clarifying the appropriate role of governance leaders in fundraising.
- Strong facilitation, communication, and relationship-building skills.
- Experience working in Alaska and/or with Alaska Native organizations, Indigenous communities, rural communities, or culturally grounded organizations is strongly preferred.
- Ability to provide recommendations that are realistic for a small organization with limited staff capacity.

6. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should be concise and include enough information for AEF to understand the respondent's approach, qualifications, team, schedule, and cost. Please include:

- Cover letter, brief statement of interest, proposed contract.
- Understanding of AEF's needs and the objectives of this engagement.
- Proposed approach and methodology, including how the assessment, planning, training, and implementation support will be integrated.
- Proposed work plan and schedule, including major milestones and anticipated level of participation required from AEF staff and Board members.
- Description of the consultant/team, roles, relevant qualifications, and availability.
- Two to four examples of comparable engagements and the results achieved.
- Two to three client references for similar work.
- Proposed fee, including a clear breakdown by phase or task, reimbursable expenses, and any assumptions. AEF welcomes fixed-fee proposals where appropriate.
- Description of any optional or ongoing implementation support that may be available after completion of the core scope, with separate pricing if applicable.
- Identification of any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

7. Evaluation of Proposals

AEF intends to select the consultant or team that best demonstrates the ability to help AEF build a sustainable, practical fundraising program. Proposals may be evaluated based on the following considerations:

Weight	Evaluation Criteria
15 Points	**Understanding of AEF and the Project:** Demonstrates a clear understanding of AEF's mission, fundraising needs, organizational capacity, and the purpose of this engagement.
25 Points	**Approach and Methodology:** Strength and practicality of the proposed approach to assessing current fundraising, identifying opportunities, developing the fundraising plan, and supporting implementation.
20 Points	**Relevant Fundraising Experience:** Demonstrated success working with foundations/nonprofits on fundraising assessments, donor development, corporate giving, grants, sponsorships, and diversified fundraising strategies.
15 Points	**Staff Training and Capacity Building:** Quality of the proposed approach to coaching and training staff, developing usable tools and systems, and leaving AEF with sustainable internal fundraising capability.
10 Points	**Qualifications and Relevant Experience of the Team:** Qualifications of the individuals who will actually perform the work, including experience with Alaska, Alaska Native organizations, Indigenous organizations, education-focused organizations, or similar organizations where applicable.
5 Points	**Work Plan and Deliverables:** Clear, realistic schedule; well-defined deliverables; and demonstrated ability to move from assessment to an actionable fundraising plan.
10 Points	**Cost and Overall Value:** Reasonableness of the proposed fee in relation to the scope, level of effort, expertise, and anticipated value to AEF.
100 Points	**TOTAL**

AEF reserves the right to conduct interviews with one or more respondents as part of the evaluation process. AEF may consider information obtained through interviews, references, and clarification of proposals in making its final selection. The Evaluation Criteria described above are provided for informational purposes only. AEF reserves the right to amend or deviate from the criteria stated above at any time.

8. Anticipated Schedule

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	November 2, 2026
Questions Due	November 13, 2026

Responses to Questions Issued	November 20, 2026
Proposal Due	December 4, 2026
Proposal Review Period	December 7-18, 2026
Holiday Break (no scheduled activities)	December 19, 2026-January 1, 2027
Consultant Interviews, if needed	January 4-8, 2027
Notice of Selection	January 15, 2027
Anticipated Project Start	March 1, 2027
Target Completion of Assessment and Plan	May 31, 2027

9. Budget

AEF has not established a fixed budget for this engagement and is requesting respondents to propose a scope and fee that reflect the work required. Proposals should clearly distinguish the cost of the core assessment and planning work from any optional extended implementation or coaching support. AEF may negotiate scope, schedule, and fee with the selected respondent.

10. Submission Instructions and Questions

Submit proposals electronically in PDF format to:

Katie Roseberry
AEF Director
Arctic Education Foundation
kroseberry@asrc.com
(907) 852-0518

Proposals must be received by **5:00 pm Alaska Time on December 4, 2026**. Questions regarding this RFP should be submitted in writing to kroseberry@asrc.com by 5:00 p.m. November 13, 2026. Responses to material questions may be shared with all invited respondents.

11. General Conditions

This RFP is a solicitation for bids only and the issuance of this RFP shall not be binding on AEF. AEF reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals or to cancel this RFP for any reason or no reason. No binding agreement shall exist with respect to the provision of services unless and until a definitive agreement has been agreed and executed by both AEF and consultant. AEF will not be liable under any circumstances for any expenses incurred by any respondent in connection with the RFP proposal, submission, or selection process.