GREATER FARALLONES ASSOCIATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Augmented Reality Interpretive Exhibits & Digital Visitor Experience

Issued by: Greater Farallones Association in partnership with Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary and the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Project Location: Kihei Maui, HI and Sanctuary System Visitor Centers & Partner Sites
RFP Issue Date: November 2026
Proposal Due Date: December 2026
Project Contacts: Kate Thompson (ONMS) & Sadaf Fakhri (GFA)

Project Background

This project will engage visitors in the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary (HIHWNMS) and other national marine sanctuary visitor centers and partner locations across the country through cutting-edge augmented reality (AR) and digital interpretive experiences. The focus is twofold: 1) bringing Hawai‘i’s humpback whales (koholā) to life, and 2) creating a virtual tour of the National Marine Sanctuary System in a scalable, modular platform adaptable for sanctuary and partner sites across the country. **Greater Farallones Association** (GFA) is supporting NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) by providing administrative and contracting services for this project. GFA will issue and administer the RFP, execute the resulting contract, and manage payments on behalf of ONMS, while ONMS staff will lead the programmatic direction, technical review, and approval of project deliverables.

Project Goals

The project is intended to:

- Develop an immersive, long-form AR narrative centered on humpback whale migration, behavior, breeding, entanglement response, and underwater acoustics in Hawaiian waters.
- Develop an easily updatable 1–2 min virtual AR tour of the 18 national marine sanctuaries across the country.
- Seamlessly integrate Native Hawaiian cultural perspectives, traditions, and ocean stewardship with NOAA scientific research and entanglement response.
- Establish a modular, cross-platform AR framework deployable via mobile devices, WebAR, QR codes, or on-site hardware across 10+ sanctuary network visitor centers and multiple additional partner sites.
- Connect visitors with immersive ocean experiences through multiple VR and AR platforms.

The audiences for this project include the general public, local community members, K–12 school groups, families, eco-tourists, and ocean conservation enthusiasts seeking accessible, multi-sensory educational experiences in Hawai‘i and across the country.

Scope of Work

GFA and ONMS are seeking qualified immersive media design firms, XR developers, and creative production teams to design, build, and deploy a comprehensive Augmented Reality Interpretive System. Key scope components include:

- Core Humpback Whale AR Experience: Long-form interactive AR experience featuring 3D whale behaviors, spatial acoustics/hydrophone audio, entanglement response, migration tracking from Alaska to Hawai‘i, and storytelling.
- An easily updatable virtual tour of the 18 national marine sanctuaries across the country.
- Modular Network Framework: Flexible software architecture allowing interchangeable local content (e.g., shipwrecks, kelp forests, coral reefs) for deployment across sanctuary visitor centers and partner sites.
- Deployment Options: Mobile WebAR / app integration, QR-code activation tags, and options for on-site kiosk, headset, or tablet stations.

Cultural & Scientific Review: Collaboration with Native Hawaiian cultural advisors, NOAA scientists, and sanctuary educators to ensure technical accuracy and cultural respect.

Deliverables

1. Detailed Technical & Creative Concept Package (User flows, AR wireframes, 3D model specs).
2. Functional AR Experience Software (Humpback Whale narrative + Modular Visitor Center framework).
3. On-site Installation & Activation Plan for ONMS Visitor Centers and partner sites.
4. Promotional & Social Media Short-Form Assets (5–30 sec video/AR teasers).
5. User Documentation, Staff Training Guides, and 12-month Technical Support Package.

Project Budget

The fixed budget allocated for contract performance is **$240,000**. Proposals should clearly itemize development phases, software licensing, 3D asset creation, hardware/kiosk integration, and travel costs. Public launch is targeted for June 2027.

Project Schedule

GFA anticipates the following schedule:

Milestone	**Date**
RFP issued	November 202
Proposals due	January 8, 202
Interviews, if applicable	January 2027
More detailed proposals requested	January 2027
Consultant selected	February 2027
Contract executed	February 2027
Project kickoff	March 2027
Milestone report (e.g., raft design, layout, storyboard, etc)	May 2027
Final completion	August 2027

Proposers should identify any concerns with the proposed schedule in their response.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include the following:

1. A brief introduction, primary contact, and confirmation of availability. Include relevant information about the firm, key personnel, qualifications, and relevant experience, including comparable projects (examples requested and what information should accompany each.
2. Proposed concept
3. Approach, including tasks, timeline, milestones, review periods, and project management approach.
4. Project Budget
5. Attachments/links to similar projects or exhibits

Minimum Qualifications

Proposers must demonstrate:

- Minimum 5 years of experience developing interactive augmented reality, 3D modeling, and spatial digital installations.
- Proven track record executing public exhibits or interpretive media for government, non-profit, or museum clients.
- Capability to incorporate cultural sensitivity, indigenous perspectives, and scientific accuracy into creative media.

Evaluation and Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Understanding of the project and project goals
- Relevant experience and demonstrated qualifications

- Qualifications of the proposed team
- Quality and feasibility of the proposed approach
- Ability to meet the project schedule
- Demonstrated ability to complete comparable projects successfully
- Cost and overall value

GFA may invite a subset of proposers to participate in interviews or provide additional information before making a final selection.

Questions Regarding the RFP

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing by **December 15, 2026** to Kate Thompson (kate.thompson@noaa.gov) and Sadaf Fakhri (contracts@farallones.org).

Proposal Submission Instructions

Proposals must be received by **November 30, 2026 at 11:59 PM HST**.

Submission method: Electronic PDF submission via email
Submit to: contracts@farallones.org and kate.thompson@noaa.gov
Subject line: RFP Proposal: Augmented Reality Interpretive Exhibits
File format: Adobe PDF
Page limit: 25 pages max

Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered.

Contract and Insurance Requirements

The selected consultant will be required to enter into a written agreement with GFA.

The contractor shall maintain Comprehensive General Liability ($1,000,000 per occurrence / $2,000,000 aggregate), Professional Liability/Cyber Liability, and Workers' Compensation insurance during the performance of the contract.

Funding and Compliance Requirements

This project is supported with federal funds. The selected contractor must comply with all applicable federal laws, regulations, award terms and conditions, and contractual requirements associated with the funding.

The selected contractor will be required to comply with all applicable federal requirements, which may include, but are not limited to:

- Applicable requirements of 2 CFR Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, including applicable contract provisions under Appendix II;
- Federal suspension and debarment requirements;
- Equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination requirements;
- Applicable accessibility requirements;
- Federal requirements related to lobbying;
- Applicable domestic preference and procurement requirements;
- Record retention and access to records for audit, monitoring, and oversight purposes;
- Requirements applicable to subcontractors and other lower-tier agreements; and
- Any additional requirements contained in the underlying federal award or required by the funding agency.

The selected contractor will be responsible for ensuring that applicable federal requirements are followed by its subcontractors and for providing certifications, documentation, or other information reasonably requested by GFA to demonstrate compliance.

Specific federal provisions applicable to the resulting contract will be incorporated into or attached to the final agreement. In the event of a conflict between the contractor's standard terms and applicable federal requirements, the federal requirements will control.

RFP Terms and Conditions

GFA reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals;
- Waive minor irregularities or request clarification;

- Request additional information from any proposer;
- Modify the RFP, scope, schedule, or selection process;
- Negotiate scope, terms, and cost with one or more proposers;
- Cancel or reissue the RFP; and
- Decline to award a contract as a result of this solicitation.

Issuance of this RFP does not commit GFA to award a contract or reimburse any costs incurred in preparing or submitting a proposal.

GFA will select the proposal that it determines provides the best overall value and meets the needs of the project.