

Step Up Suncoast, Inc.

6428 Parkland Drive  
Sarasota, Florida 34243

Request for proposal for  
**Financial Statement Audit and Related Services, including Form 990**

for the periods  
**January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023**

and option periods of  
January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024  
January 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025  
January 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026  
January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2027

Inquiries and proposals should be directed to:

Name: Peter Murawski

Title: CFO

Entity: Step Up Suncoast, Inc.

Address: 6428 Parkland Drive, Sarasota, FL 34243

Phone: 941-827-2887 ext. 7903

Email: [petermurawski@stepupsuncoast.org](mailto:petermurawski@stepupsuncoast.org)

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## General Information

### A. Purpose

This request for proposal (RFP) is to contract for the preparation of its annual independent financial statement audit and related filings as stated in the following list for the year ending December 31, 2023. The proposal includes options for four additional years.

Step Up Suncoast, Inc. requires the following services:

1. Annual independent financial statement audit.
2. Federal Single Audit.
3. Completion and submission of Clearinghouse documents.
4. Preparation and submission of IRS Forms 8868 and 990.
5. Management letter and required communications letter.
6. Exit Conference with Management Team.
7. Presentation in detail to the Finance and Audit Committee.
8. Presentation in summary to the full Board of Directors.

### B. Who may respond

Only licensed certified public accountants may respond to this RFP.

C. Instructions on proposal submission

- 1. **Closing submission date:** Proposals must be submitted no later than **4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on October 31, 2023.**
- 2. **Inquiries:** Inquiries concerning this RFP should be directed to Peter Murawski at 941-827-2887 ext. 7903 or by email to [pmurawski@stepupsuncoast.org](mailto:pmurawski@stepupsuncoast.org). Offerors may direct questions via email, or a phone or in-person meeting. The cut-off date for inquiries is **October 19, 2023.**
- 3. **Conditions of proposal:** All costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responding to this RFP will be the responsibility of the Offeror and will not be reimbursed by Step Up Suncoast, Inc.
- 4. **Instructions to prospective contractors:**

Your proposal should be addressed as follows:

Name: Amy Yount  
 Title: President/CEO  
 Entity: Step Up Suncoast, Inc.  
 Address: 6428 Parkland Drive  
Sarasota, FL 34243

It is important that the Offeror’s proposal be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked in the lower left-hand corner with the following information:

Request for proposal  
 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard, October 31, 2023  
SEALED PROPOSAL  
**For Financial Statement Audit and Related Services**

*Failure to do so may result in premature disclosure of your proposal.*

- 5. Five (5) hard copies of the proposal must be submitted.

It is the responsibility of the Offeror to ensure that the proposal is received by Step Up Suncoast, Inc. by the date and time specified above.

Late proposals will not be considered.

- 6. **Right to reject:** Step Up Suncoast, Inc. reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based on the factors described in this RFP.

7. Small and/or minority-owned businesses: Efforts will be made by Step Up Suncoast, Inc. to utilize small businesses and minority-owned businesses. An Offeror qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the definition of "small business" as established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201).
8. Presentations: At the discretion of Step Up Suncoast, Inc., Offerors submitting proposals may be requested to make oral presentations as part of the evaluation process. Presentations may be delivered in person, via teleconference, or video conference such as Zoom or Teams. Reasonable advance notice will be provided to selected Offerors. Not all Offerors submitting a proposal will be asked to participate in oral presentations.
9. Notification of award:
  - a. It is expected that a decision about selection of the successful audit firm will be made within one month of the closing date for the receipt of proposals.
  - b. Upon conclusion of final negotiations with the successful audit firm, all Offerors submitting proposals in response to this Request for Proposal will be informed, in writing, of the name of the successful audit firm.
  - c. The contract is expected to be a one-year fixed-price contract with options for four additional one-year periods.

### E. Description of entity and records to be audited

Step Up Suncoast, Inc. is a non-profit community action agency, which serves Manatee, Hardee, Desoto, Sarasota, and Charlotte counties in Florida. Step Up Suncoast, Inc. is a private, non-profit corporation determined to be exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is governed by a 15-member volunteer Board of Directors. Administrative offices and all records are located at 6428 Parkland Drive, Sarasota, Florida 34243.

Step Up Suncoast, Inc. is a multi-fund environment with varying fiscal periods/years for its multiple programs. We currently have 12 Federal grants totaling approximately \$15,700,000, 1 State contract (Program Income) for approximately \$253,000, 1 State Appropriation contract through local government of \$10,000, 6 local grants totaling \$1,154,000, and various private grants of approximately \$850,000. Our last audit showed total grant revenue of \$18,262,872.

Step Up Suncoast, Inc. utilizes a computer-assisted accounting system. The accounting software package is Abila MIP Fund Accounting Version 2023. Payroll is prepared using ADP Payroll for our approximately 220 employees. We currently utilize two bank accounts and have a line of credit to assist with cash flow since our grants are mostly paid on a cost-reimbursement basis. Step Up Suncoast, Inc. writes approximately 300 checks per month. Records to be audited are available for review by the Offerors prior to proposal submission. Additional information can be obtained by contacting the CFO directly.

### F. Options

At the discretion of Step Up Suncoast, Inc., this audit contract may be extended for four additional one-year periods. Please provide proposed pricing for the additional years. Pricing for the option periods may be altered in the future if Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s audit requirements change. However, additional costs must be agreed upon with Step Up Suncoast, Inc. prior to starting each year's audit.

## Specification schedule

### A. Scope of a financial and compliance audit

The purpose of the Request for Proposal is to obtain the services of a public accounting firm, whose principal officers are independent certified public accountants, certified or licensed by the Florida State Board of Accountancy, or qualified to receive a temporary permit issued by the Florida State Board of Accountancy, (said permit to be in effect prior to engagement of services) hereinafter referred to as the "Offeror" to perform a financial and compliance audit of Step Up Suncoast, Inc. and its related filings.

### B. Description of programs/contracts/grants

See 2022 Audited Financial Statements for Step Up Suncoast, Inc.

### C. Performance

Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s records should be audited through December 31, 2023.

The Offeror is required to prepare audit reports in accordance with *Government Auditing Standards* and *Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance)*, and *Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)*.

### D. Delivery schedule

The Offeror is to transmit one copy of the draft audit report to *Step Up Suncoast, Inc.*'s Executive Director. The draft audit report is due on June 10, 2024.

The Offeror shall deliver 30 final audit reports to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s Board of Directors no later than June 27, 2024.

Auditor shall also present their report to the Finance and Audit Committee in detail on June 25, 2024, and to the full Board of Directors with highlights on June 27, 2024.

Form 8868 will need to be filed prior to May 15, 2024 and Form 990 in draft format will need to be presented to the Board of Directors prior to their September 26, 2024 meeting for acceptance and then filed prior to November 15, 2024.

Reports may be submitted earlier than the schedule above. However, if the Offeror fails to make delivery of the audit reports within the time schedule specified herein, or if the Offeror delivers audit reports that do not conform to all of the provisions of this contract, Step Up Suncoast, Inc. may, by written notice of default to the Offeror, terminate the whole or any part of this contract. Under certain extenuating circumstances, the contracting agent may extend this schedule upon written request of the Offeror with sufficient justification.

## E. Pricing

The Offeror's proposed price for services should include a not-to-exceed total fee and a fee per service (audit services and tax services as requested in this RFP). Any out-of-pocket expenses should also be indicated. The Offeror's proposed price should be submitted separately. Include information indicating how the price was determined. For example, the Offeror should indicate the estimated number of hours by staff level, hourly rates, and total cost by staff level. Pricing for years two through five should also be included. The pricing information should be in a separate sealed envelope.

## F. Payment

Payment will be made by Step Up Suncoast, Inc. as follows:

Progress payments may be allowed to the extent that Step Up Suncoast, Inc. can determine that satisfactory progress is being made.

Upon delivery of the 30 copies of the final reports to Step Up Suncoast, Inc. and the Board's acceptance and approval, the Offeror may submit a bill for the balance due on the contract for the audit.

Should Step Up Suncoast, Inc. reject a report, the authorized representative of Step Up Suncoast, Inc. will notify the Offeror in writing of such rejection giving the reason(s). The right to reject a report shall extend throughout the term of this contract and for ninety (90) days after the Offeror submits the final invoice for payment.

Progress payments will be allowed to the extent that *Step Up Suncoast, Inc.* can determine satisfactory progress is being made. A separate payment will be issued in connection with the Form 990 tax service.

## G. Audit review

All audit reports prepared under this contract will be reviewed by Step Up Suncoast, Inc. and its funding sources to ensure compliance with the General Accounting Office's (GAO) *Government Auditing Standards* and other appropriate audit guides.

## H. Exit conference

An exit conference with Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s representatives and the Offeror's representatives will be held at the conclusion of the fieldwork. Observations and recommendations must be summarized in writing and discussed with Step Up Suncoast, Inc. It should include internal control and program compliance observations and recommendations.

## I. Workpapers



1. Upon request, the Offeror will provide a copy of the workpapers pertaining to any questioned costs determined in the audit. The workpapers must be concise and provide the basis for the questioned costs as well as an analysis of the problem.
2. The workpapers will be retained for at least three years from the end of the audit period.
3. The workpapers will be available for examination by authorized representatives of the cognizant federal or state audit agency, the GAO and Step Up Suncoast, Inc.

## J. Confidentiality

The Offeror agrees to keep the information related to all contracts in strict confidence. Other than the reports submitted to Step Up Suncoast, Inc., the Offeror agrees not to publish, reproduce, or otherwise divulge such information in whole or in part, in any manner or form, or authorize or permit others to do so, taking such reasonable measures as are necessary to restrict access to the information, while in the Offeror's possession, to those employees on the Offeror's staff who must have the information on a "need to know" basis.

The Offeror agrees to immediately notify, in writing, Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s authorized representative in the event the Offeror determines or has reason to suspect a breach of this requirement.

## K. AICPA professional standards

The AICPA Professional Standards state:

### **Ethics Interpretation 501-3 – Failure to follow standards and/or procedures or other requirements in governmental audits.**

Engagements for audits of government grants, government units or other recipients of government monies typically require that such audits be in compliance with government auditing standards, guides procedures, statutes, rules and regulations, in addition to generally accepted auditing standards. If a member has accepted such an engagement, and undertakes an obligation to follow specified government auditing standards, guides, procedures, statutes, rules and regulations, in addition to generally accepted auditing standards, he is obligated to follow such requirements.

Failure to do so is an act discreditable to the profession in violation of Rule 501, unless the member discloses in his report the fact that such requirements were not followed and the reasons therefor.

## Technical qualifications

The Offeror, in its proposal, shall, as a minimum, include the following:

### A. Understanding our needs

The Offeror should describe the current challenges and opportunities specific to our organization. Describe how your firm is best suited to assist our organization in facing those challenges and opportunities moving forward.

### B. Understanding the scope of work

The Offeror should clearly describe the scope of work to be performed in alignment with this RFP.

### C. Understanding our industry

The Offeror should describe its understanding of our industry by providing specific industry knowledge and expertise as well as prior auditing experience.

1. Prior experience working with nonprofit organizations
2. Prior experience auditing grant funded organizations
3. Prior experience auditing organizations similar to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.
4. Prior experience providing additional services to organizations similar to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.

### D. Engagement team

The Offeror should briefly describe the qualifications of staff to be assigned to the audits. Descriptions should include:

1. Audit team makeup.
2. Overall supervision to be exercised.
3. Prior experience of the individual audit team members. Audit team bios should include education, position in firm, years with the firm, industry-specific experience, and training on the recent Uniform Guidance.

### E. Organization, size, and structure

The Offeror should describe its organization, size (in relation to audits to be performed), and structure.

Description should include:

1. Size of the Offeror, including number of employees and physical site locations.
2. Explanation of independence.
3. Any conflicts of interest that exist.
4. Results of peer review.
5. Explanation if the Offer is a small business, minority business, women's business enterprise, or labor surplus firm.

#### F. Audit approach to the engagement

The Offeror should describe its approach of the work to be performed.

#### G. Certifications

The Offeror must sign and include, as an attachment to its proposal, the certifications enclosed with this RFP. The publications listed in the certifications will not be provided to potential Offerors by Step Up Suncoast, Inc. because Step Up Suncoast, Inc. desires to contract only with an Offeror who is already familiar with these publications.

## Proposal evaluation

### A. Submission of proposals

All proposals shall include five hard copies of the Offeror's technical qualifications, five hard copies of the pricing information and five copies of the signed certifications. These documents will become part of the contract.

### B. Nonresponsive proposals

Proposals may be judged nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

1. The proposal is not received in a timely manner in accordance with the terms of this RFP.
2. The proposal does not follow the specified format.
3. The proposal does not include the Certifications.
4. The proposal is not adequate to form a judgment by the reviewers that the proposed undertaking would comply with the *Government Auditing Standards* of the U.S. Comptroller General.

### C. Proposal evaluation

Evaluation of each proposal will be scored on the following six factors.

- |   | Point range |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Understanding our industry   | 0 - 10      |
| a. Understanding our current challenges and opportunities   |             |
| b. Firms approach to addressing our challenges  |             |
| 2. Understanding our industry   | 0 – 30      |
| a. Prior experience <i>working with nonprofit organizations</i>   |             |
| b. Prior experience auditing grant-funded organizations   |             |
| c. Prior experience auditing organizations similar to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.  |             |
| d. Prior experience providing additional services to organizations similar to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.  |             |
| 3. Organization, size, and structure of Offeror's firm<br>(consider size in relation to audits to be performed)   | 0 - 5       |
| a. Adequate size of the firm  |             |
| b. Minority business/small business/women's business enterprise/labor surplus firm  |             |
| 4. Qualifications of staff to be assigned to the audits to be performed.<br>This will be determined from résumés submitted. Include education, position in firm, and years and types of experience. | 0 – 20      |

a. Prior experience of the individual audit team members	
b. Overall supervision to be exercised	
5. Offeror’s audit approach to the engagement	0 – 15
a. Adequate coverage	
b. Realistic engagement timetable	
6. Price	0 – 20
Maximum points	100

#### D. Review process

In compliance with Uniform Guidance 2 CFR Part 200.319 – Competition, Step Up Suncoast, Inc. has conducted this procurement in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference.

The Step Up Suncoast, Inc. may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any or all Offerors to clarify or negotiate modifications to the Offerors’ proposals.

However, Step Up Suncoast, Inc. reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, that the Offeror can propose.

Step Up Suncoast, Inc. contemplates award of the contract to the responsible Offeror with the highest total points.

## Certifications

On behalf of the Offeror:

1. The individual signing certifies that he/she is authorized to contract on behalf of the Offeror.
2. The individual signing certifies that the Offeror is not involved in any agreement to pay money or other consideration for the execution of this agreement, other than to an employee of the Offeror.
3. The individual signing certifies that the prices in this proposal have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, or agreement, for the purpose of restricting competition.
4. The individual signing certifies that the prices quoted in this proposal have not been knowingly disclosed by the Offeror prior to an award to any other Offeror or potential Offeror.
5. The individual signing certifies that there has been no attempt by the Offeror to discourage any potential Offeror from submitting a proposal.
6. The individual signing certifies that the Offeror is a properly licensed certified public accountant.
7. The individual signing certifies that the Offeror meets the independence standards of the *Government Auditing Standards*.
8. The individual signing certifies that he/she is aware of and will comply with the GAO's continuing education requirement of 80 hours of continuing education every two years and that 24 hours of the 80 hours of education will be in subjects directly related to the government environment and to government auditing for individuals.
9. The individual signing certifies that he/she is aware of and will comply with the GAO requirement of an external quality control (peer) review at least once every three years.
10. The individual signing certifies that he/she has read and understands the following publications relative to the proposed audits:
  - a. *Government Auditing Standards* (Yellow Book)
  - b. *Title 2 U.S. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards* ("Uniform Guidance")
  - c. *Audits of Not-for-Profit Entities* (AICPA Audit Guide)
  - d. *Audits of State and Local Governments* (AICPA Audit Guide)
  - e. Appropriate CFR's (Code of Federal Regulations) relating to Step Up Suncoast, Inc.'s contracts and grants (i.e. 45 CFR 1301, HHS, and Head Start Grants Program Performance Standards and 45 CFR Part 75: "HHS Uniform Guidance", 10 CFR Part 600, DOE's administrative requirements, and 10 CFR Part 400, DOE's weatherization program requirements). Please also refer to the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards and Other Grants contained in the Step Up Suncoast, Inc. – 2022 Audited Financial Statements.
11. The individual signing certifies that he/she has read and understands all of the information in this Request for Proposal, including the information on the programs/grants/contracts to be audited.

12. The individual signing certifies that the Offeror, and any individuals to be assigned to the audit, does not have a record of substandard audit work and has not been debarred or suspended from doing work with any federal, state, or local government. (If the Offeror or any individual to be assigned to the audits has been found in violation of any state or AICPA professional standards, this information must be disclosed.)

Dated this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Offeror's Firm Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of Offeror's Representative)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed Name and Title of Individual Signing)