



## **The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition**

Post Date: May 20, 2024  
Proposal Due Date: June 10, 2024  
Selection by: June 24, 2024  
Contract Start Date: July 1, 2024  
Contract End Date: June 30, 2025

## Request for Proposals

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition (NABS), in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), requests proposals for a consultant to formulate an interpretive media plan that includes crafting messages to 1) honor the experiences of the children who lived and those who died at the Pipestone Indian Boarding School, 2) communicate truths about the school to a public audience, and 3) educate a public audience about the impact of the boarding schools on Native families and communities. This is a grant-funded project with \$20,000 in the approved budget. If contract expenses realistically exceed this amount, proposals up to \$30,000 will be considered.

### About Us

NABS was founded in 2012 to lead the movement for truth, justice and healing for Indigenous peoples impacted by U.S. Indian boarding schools. We are Indigenous led with 100% of the Board of Directors and Officers being Native American and Alaska Native. Visit <http://www.boardingschoolhealing.org> for more information about us, our strategic action plans, community impact, and resources.

NPS manages the Pipestone National Monument, which was established by an act of Congress in 1937 to uphold the rights of Native Americans to dig for pipestone in the onsite quarries. NPS has an established consulting relationship with 23 affiliated Tribal Nations to advise on land management and related topics relevant to their communities. NPS and Tribal leaders have been in dialogue about the Pipestone Indian Boarding School since 2020, leading to a collaborative partnership with NABS and this request for proposals.

### Background

The Pipestone Indian Boarding School operated from 1893-1953, separating Native American children as young as four years old from their families, communities, and culture. While the Pipestone National Monument (Monument) is nearby, NPS has never interpreted the history of the school or the boarding school era to the public.

In 2022, the Monument, National Park Foundation (NPF), and NABS formed a partnership to digitize school records, make them accessible through the National Indian Boarding School Digital Archive (NIBSDA), engage with descendant communities, and develop interpretive media. NABS has over a decade of expertise in working with descendants and communities on their journey to healing. This partnership led to the development of a Mellon Humanities Foundation/National Park Foundation Fellowship to research the school, its culture, and the children who attended.

A 2-year post-doctoral Mellon Fellow began researching the digitized records from Pipestone Boarding School contained within NIBSDA in the Fall of 2023. While the records are not complete, they provide a

window into what life was like for children who attended the school and how their families back home attempted to maintain relationships with their children. Many stories of violence and trauma have been uncovered and a list of children who died while attending Pipestone Boarding School is being created. The project team including NABS, NPS, the Mellon Fellow and Tribal advisors are now ready to prepare an interpretive plan to share what has been learned so far.

## Methodologies

The development of the interpretive plan should be wholly guided by the perspectives and wishes of Tribal members for educating the public about the boarding school era, a recent history that impacts every Native American person living today.

The contractor will have access to several relevant forums for understanding diverse Native American perspectives. In addition, the contractor will have access to subject-matter experts with strong knowledge of and access to primary source material. The contractor is not expected to conduct original research. There are three primary and interrelated sources of information that will shape the interpretive plan: Government-to-Government consultation; community conversations; and the standing project team.

- Government-to-Government: NPS has ongoing relationships with many Tribal Nations at the government-to-government level, working primarily through Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs). Twenty-three Tribal Nations - including the Oceti Sakowin (Dakota/Lakota), Iowa, Omaha, Ponca, Otoe-Missouria, and Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara Nations - have a cultural affiliation to the Pipestone quarries, and many others have children who attended the school. NPS has also begun outreach to Ojibwe Nations, whose children attended the school, and continue to establish these new consulting partnerships. The NPS has had several conversations with representatives of culturally affiliated Tribes, through written correspondence and in-person site visits, intertribal meetings, and one-on-one conversations. The contractor will have access to summary records from these conversations.
- Community Conversations: NABS prioritizes the engagement of boarding school survivors and descendant communities as its highest value across its mission of healing, from board structure to advocacy work to research and education. Expanding on a successful partnership with the Upper Sioux Community, NABS is in conversation with Tribal communities to facilitate listening sessions. These meetings will be a forum for discussing the records available, the community knowledge, and the community wishes for future public awareness. Information from these meetings will be provided to the contractor. With the consent of the community, the contractor is welcome to participate directly as much as possible.
- Standing Team: NPS and NABS formed a standing project team that draws on additional subject-matter experts. This team accesses, digitizes, and catalogs Pipestone Indian School records; researches primary source material to bring stories to light; engages with Tribal Nations and community partners; and seeks to develop interpretive materials. This team includes NABS Director of Digital Archives; NABS Digital Archives Specialist; NABS Community Engagement Coordinator; NPS Native American Affairs Liaison; NPS Pipestone Superintendent; NPS Mellon Fellow; Curatorial and Interpretation Mentor; and THPO Advisor. Various members of this team meet on a weekly basis. The contractor has direct access to this team to pose questions and seek feedback and is invited to join hour-long calls on a monthly basis.

## Project Goals

1. Establish a comprehensive interpretive media plan to successfully education the public about the history and impacts of the Pipestone Indian Boarding School.
2. Engage project partners, advisors and Tribal leaders in planning to gain their confident in and endorsement of the plan.
3. Gain understanding of project partners, advisors and Tribal leaders priorities for ceremonial activities or gatherings related to the possible demolition of the Pipestone boarding school superintendent’s house.

## Timeframe

The project is expected to begin by July 1, 2024, and all work completed by June 30, 2025.

- July 1-August 31, 2024: Orientation and Review phase
- September 1-30, 2024: Engagement phase
- October 1, 2024-January 31, 2025: Plan Development Phase
- February 1- June 30, 2025: Feedback and Adoption Phase

## Success Measures

Ultimately, success will be demonstrated by the unanimous approval by the project team and advisors of a comprehensive interpretive media plan. A well-prepared plan will include success indicators to measure outcomes.

## Scope of Work

The contractor will work closely with NABS’s Board and staff leadership to lead the following strategic planning phases.

### 1. Orientation and Review

- Gather and review related information from three main sources that will shape the interpretive plan: Government-to-Government consultation; community conversations; and the standing project team.
- Meet monthly (remote) with the project team to report on progress and identify gaps in information to fill.

Deliverables:

- 1) Summary report on the initial information review.
- 2) Questions for project partners and Tribal leaders developed and finalized for the project engagement phase.

### 2. Engagement

- Hold preparation meetings with the project team as needed via zoom.
- Lead one two-day on-site planning meeting in Pipestone by September 30, 2024 (NPS will coordinate meeting space and invitations).
- Engage Tribal partners in 1-2 hour pre and post virtual sessions to deepen understanding.

Deliverables:

- 1) Clear outline and agenda for leading a 2-day planning meeting for a group of 20+ attendees.
- 2) Post-meeting written summary with main takeaways, themes, and conclusions.

### 3. Plan Development

- Prepare goals for immediate, short-term, and long-term outcomes, and review with the project team.
- Provide an analysis of media options and recommendations for priorities as well as rough cost estimates of recommended media options (for example, waysides, web, art/sculpture, trail guide, traveling exhibit, videos, etc.).
- Make recommendations to the project team for ceremonial activities or gatherings related to the possible demolition of the boarding school superintendent's house.

#### Deliverables:

- 1) Draft of the interpretive media plan by January 31, 2025 (including goals and objectives, themes, subpoints, media options, cost estimate, and recommendations on ceremonial gathering and superintendent's house).

### 4. Feedback and Adoption

- Coordinate with NPS to incorporate feedback on draft interpretive plan. NPS will lead the Government-to-Government process for receiving feedback on draft documents from Tribal leaders.
- Coordinate with NABS to incorporate feedback on draft interpretive plan. NABS will lead the community process for receiving feedback on draft documents from Tribal leaders.
- Work with the project team to make any final edits and approve the final interpretive plan.

#### Deliverables:

- 1) An electronic version of the final plan to the project team (as Word and pdf documents), including meeting notes and supporting documentation.

## Proposal Requirements

Proposers should have knowledge of the U.S. Indian boarding school history, legacy, and impacts, as well as an understanding of the resulting intergenerational trauma. All proposals should include:

- A summary of your qualifications and experience with similar types of projects.
- Your approach to complete the work along with a timeline.
- Biographies of key team members.
- Itemized budget aligned with deliverables and total amount to complete the work.
- 3 sample interpretive plans or similar documents showing your work.
- 3 professional references.

Note: Contractors are required to maintain General and Professional liability insurance including Workers Compensation insurance in compliance with applicable laws.

## Proposal Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Completeness and adherence to the proposal requirements.
- Administrative and technical competence.
- Approach for completing the work.
- Preference is given to affirmative representation from Native American-owned businesses, Tribal enterprises, and individuals, as well as small and minority owned businesses, and women's business enterprises.
- Experience demonstrating effectiveness in delivering the same or similar services.
- Team member qualifications.
- Cost.

## For Questions

If you have any questions, please contact Samuel Torres, Deputy CEO: [storres@nabshc.org](mailto:storres@nabshc.org) or Fallon Carey, Digital Archives Specialist: [fcarey@nabshc.org](mailto:fcarey@nabshc.org)

## To Submit Your Proposal

By June 10, 2024, email to Tom Kinley [tkinley@nabshc.org](mailto:tkinley@nabshc.org) with Strategic Plan in the subject line.

*NABS is an Equal Opportunity Employer committed to a work environment free of all forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence. All employment and contracting decisions are based on merit, competence, performance, and organization needs. NABS prioritizes work to empower and include people from Indigenous communities who have been impacted by U.S. Indian Boarding School policies. We are proud of our collaborative and wellness-focused culture where all people feel safe to bring their whole selves.*