

# **Statement of Work (SOW) for Animal Care Assistant Services**

February 28, 2024  
National Museum of Natural History  
Office of Education

## **Background**

This contract position is located in the Branch of Visitor Experience and Audience Engagement (VEAE) of the National Museum of Natural History (NMNH), Smithsonian Institution (SI). The Branch of Visitor Experience and Audience Engagement is responsible for implementing for NMNH a myriad of services for daily visitor operations and activities in the public areas of the Museum and in the volunteer program. The contract is responsible in assisting with the animal care and maintenance of the Insect Zoo exhibit and lab space and with coordination of the Insect Ambassador Volunteers.

The contractor assists with the operations of the Insect Zoo exhibit and lab space of the National Museum of Natural History serving over 7 million visitors annually. The Visitor Experience and Audience Engagement team interfaces with the majority of Museum Offices including Education, Exhibitions, Special Events, Office of Facilities Management, Security, Building Management, Information Technology, Restaurant Associates, Administration and partner organizations including Central Smithsonian Office of Visitor Services and Smithsonian Enterprises.

The contractor upholds the Smithsonian, National Museum of Natural History's philosophy, vision, and core standards for visitor service. Their primary focus is to ensure that the visitors' "first and last impression" of their experience at the museum is a positive, productive, and memorable one.

The Insect Zoo exhibit and lab space house live insects in exhibition space within the National Museum of Natural History. Daily care for the insects is needed.

## **Scope**

Contractor shall care for live insect displays and laboratory cultures in both the Insect Zoo exhibit and lab space and be responsible for updating content displayed in the exhibit space. Contractor must be available to work onsite at the National Museum of Natural History. Contractor must work 40 hours per week, including one weekend day and holidays that fall during the scheduled work week. Contractor must be able to lift 50 pounds. Contractor will work in hot humid environments for extended periods of time. Contractor must be ok with handling live and dead arthropods.

Qualifications include:

- Minimum of Bachelor's Degree in the Biological Sciences or related fields
- Ability to engage with diverse audiences, including students, scientists, museum educators, volunteers, other museum staff, and visitors

- Knowledge and skill in oral, written and digital communication sufficient to address varied audiences and to serve as an interface between multiple museum constituents and stakeholders
- Outstanding organizational skills and demonstrated ability to follow procedures and policies to maintain safety and security at an institution
- Exceptional customer service skills

Must be prepared to obtain a Unique Entity ID and register in the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to start date.

## **Objectives**

Contractor shall water, feed, clean, perform exhibit maintenance, keep appropriate animal and plant care records, and comply with all USDA guidelines concerning containment or animal and plants in the Butterfly Pavilion and Insect Zoo exhibits and lab areas.

Contractor shall also interact with visitors in the Butterfly Pavilion to enhance visitor experience, as well as assist with containment of butterflies in the exhibit.

## **Tasks**

The Animal Care Assistant is responsible for:

- Preparing the exhibit space for arriving visitors by cleaning exhibit cases and feeding the live arthropods used by volunteers on interactive carts before the museum opens at 10am
- Assist Horticulture Department in the installation of new plants in the exhibit space before the museum opens at 10am
- Keeping accurate data used in the annual USDA report
- Keeping accurate arthropod shipment data used in annual USDA report
- Cleaning and maintaining exhibit cases
- Keeping accurate arthropod care data sheets to track health of arthropods
- Maintaining a clean lab including emergence cases and maintaining arthropods housed in the lab
- Feeding all animals
- Collecting plant materials for arthropods
- Keeping staff informed when supplies are needed
- Conducting tarantula feedings when volunteers are not available
- Follow all USDA and Smithsonian guidelines and directives including proper waste disposal
- Assist with annual exhibit and lab space maintenance
- Assist Visitor Experience Staff with crowd management, information desks and other areas of the museum overseen by LVVE during periods of peak visitation and/or special events
- Assist Volunteer Program in management of Insect Zoo volunteers
- Meet weekly with the COTR for status updates on deliverables

## **Delivery**

The Animal Care Assistant is responsible for:

- Preparing the Insect Zoo for arriving visitors by cleaning exhibit cases and feeding the live arthropods used by volunteers on interactive carts.
- Preparing the Butterfly Pavilion for visitors by cleaning all surfaces in the pavilion, watering plants, stocking fruit stations, cleaning chrysalis cases, and draining flower beds.
- Assist Horticulture Department in the installation of new plants
- Keeping accurate chrysalis emergence data used in the annual USDA report
- Cleaning and maintaining exhibit cases
- Keeping accurate arthropod care data sheets to track health of arthropods
- Maintaining a clean lab including emergence cases and maintaining arthropods housed in the lab
- Feeding all animals
- Collecting plant materials for arthropods
- Keeping staff informed when supplies are needed
- Fulfilling USDA requirements by inspecting existing visitors for potential hidden butterflies on their person(at least 2 hours per day)
- Conducting tarantula feedings when volunteers are not available
- Follow all USDA and Smithsonian guidelines and directives including proper waste disposal
- Assist with annual Insect Zoo and Butterfly Pavilion maintenance
- Assist with entry of Public into the Butterfly Pavilion on Tuesdays
- Assist Visitor Experience Staff with line management
- Assist Volunteer Program in management of Insect Zoo and Butterfly Pavilion volunteers
- Meet weekly with the COTR for status updates on deliverables

### **Government-Furnished Property**

Contractors are provided uniforms to be worn when onsite, a computer and Smithsonian network account, and the necessary tools/supplies for animal care and cleaning.

### **Place of Performance**

Contractor must be available to work onsite at the National Museum of Natural History.

1000 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20013

### **Period of Performance**

Contractor must work 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day, including one weekend day and pre-arranged holidays, evenings, and special events. For each 8-hour day a 30-minute unpaid lunch and two paid 15-minute breaks. Lunch and break times are flexible in the day depending on the days' needs.

Schedule One: Tuesday-Saturday

Schedule Two: Sunday-Thursday

Original period of performance will cover a one year period from July 23, 2024 – July 22, 2025.

Pending need and funding, there will be four one-year (\*could be less than on-year\*) optional periods. Proposals should be submitted with base year hourly rate and 4 optional out-year hourly rates.

With 2-week notice, flexibility to change schedule if requested and mutually agreed upon between the COTR and the contractor.