



Secretariat
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Solicitation of Expression of Interest To Host and Staff the LakeNet Secretariat

The Board of Trustees of LakeNet seeks a partnership with a U.S.-based university or nonprofit organization to host the international secretariat, to collaborate in accessing operational and project funding, and to provide facilities and staff to support its work. The successful applicant will have an opportunity to build on LakeNet's history of accomplishment in advancing efforts worldwide to promote the protection and restoration of lake ecosystems. An expression of interest from interested parties is requested by October 30, 2006.

Background on this opportunity is presented below, and the process for submitting an expression of interest is outlined. Further detail about LakeNet is available on the website, www.worldlakes.org.

Overview: LakeNet is a global network of individuals and organizations committed to the protection, restoration and conservation of inland water bodies world-wide, with a special emphasis on lake ecosystems. There are no formal requirements or fees for membership in LakeNet. Rather, it serves as an open and dynamic forum that involves government agencies, private enterprises, academic institutions, non-profit organizations and other entities with roles, responsibilities and/ or interests relating to lake ecosystems. LakeNet is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization that has successfully directed charitable contributions from a range of sources to protection, restoration and conservation efforts in more than 20 countries. It is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees and managed by a small staff responsible for operations, Board support and project management.

Vision, Mission and Goal: LakeNet's vision is a world of healthy lakes that support thriving human and natural communities. Its vision is to work with people and organizations to protect and restore the health of lake ecosystems throughout the world. Its information services, exchanges, assistance programs and policy work are aimed at improving the stewardship of lake ecosystems by educating and inspiring people, cultivating leadership, and strengthening lake organizations. Its goals are to: 1) promote a sustainable, integrated and inclusive approach to managing lake watersheds; 2) share lake and watershed management experience, practices and technologies; 3) strengthen the capacity of lake management organizations, particularly those in developing countries and those working on lakes of particular economic, ecological and/ or cultural heritage value; 4) raise awareness of the values and threats to lakes around the world; and 5) elevate the status of lakes in international, national, regional and local policy discussions and funding decisions.

Board of Trustees: LakeNet is governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees elected by their peers for up to two, three- year terms of office. Bylaws provide for up to 15 Trustees. Collectively, the Board exhibits a wide range of backgrounds and experience that reflects a strong interest in the environment, water resources planning and management, public administration, and international affairs. The Board of Trustees is actively involved in all affairs of the organization, setting overall policy direction and priorities, and providing staff oversight and guidance.

Current Programs: LakeNet presently has two formal contracts underway. It is the “Partnership Activity Lead” for a United Nations- supported initiative to provide “structured learning” among multiple lake basin projects around the world. LakeNet is moderating an electronic forum and will help facilitate the Global Environment Facility 4th International Waters Conference in Capetown, South Africa in 2007. It is also a member of the GLOWS (Global Water for Sustainability) consortium, a USAID funded initiative carrying out pilot projects in several locations around the world. In addition to these specific projects and its ongoing coordinate functions, LakeNet maintains a website (www.worldlakes.org) that supports a range of organizational functions, including an electronic forum; a comprehensive database on the world’s lakes; extensive archives; a calendar; a periodic “Lakes in the News” feature; and an online giving program through Network for Good.

History and Selected Accomplishments: David Barker and Lisa Borre co-founded LakeNet in 1996 under the auspices of an exchange program between Lake Champlain and Lake Toba, Indonesia. The following year, the co-founders assumed leadership of Monitor International and established a freshwater program within the organization to support LakeNet. In 2002, Monitor International’s Board of Trustees ended its marine conservation program and re-named the organization LakeNet, in recognition of the rapid growth of its lakes program. The first international gathering of LakeNet took place in 1999 at the “Great Lakes of the World” workshop at the 8th World Lakes Conference in Copenhagen. The following year, its web site was launched, and LakeNet organized an international workshop in Burlington, VT for representatives from 20 lake basins around the world. In 2002, LakeNet and partner organizations secured \$1.6 million in financing to launch the World Lake Basin Management Initiative with grants from the Global Environment Facility and USAID. The following year, LakeNet and its partners launched the World Lake Vision at the 3rd World Water Forum in Japan, and held three regional workshops in Africa, Asia and the Americas. In 2004, LakeNet completed on-the-ground technical assistance activities in seven countries and its first- ever appeal for private funding. Last year, LakeNet released (worldwide) reports of the Lake Basin Management Initiative. Membership in the global network currently consists of 2,000 individuals and organizations in more than 100 countries.

Nature of Partnership Opportunity: LakeNet is undergoing a transition in leadership prompted by the impending retirement of its co-founders. New leadership on the Board of Trustees, coupled with LakeNet’s stature and history of accomplishment, offers a tremendous opportunity for partnership with a university or nonprofit organization. Specifically, the Board of Trustees seeks a partner university/ nonprofit organization that will provide services that include: hosting and staffing the international secretariat of LakeNet; maintaining and developing the LakeNet web site; providing administrative support to the Board of Trustees; working with the Board to identify, pursue and secure general operating and securing project-specific funding from governmental, foundation and private donor sources. The partner organization is expected

to provide baseline operational support initially, with the expectation of working with the Board of Trustees to generate substantial funding to cover the partner organization's operational/ administrative expenses, as well as its involvement in high profile projects addressing the world's lake ecosystems.

Qualifications of Interested Universities/ Non profit Organizations: Prospective partners should be based in the U.S. and are expected to demonstrate consistency with and a commitment to helping achieve LakeNet's vision, mission and goals; requisite expertise in organizational operations and management; demonstrated interest and expertise in international activities and the study/ management of lake ecosystems; expertise in grant-writing and program development; and a willingness to provide an up-front investment (in-kind services) in LakeNet as funding sources are cultivated. The Board of Trustees is looking for a minimum three- year commitment and anticipates an initial need for a minimum half- time staffing commitment to provide administrative and program development services. Demonstrated experience with hosting or partnering with nonprofit organizations such as LakeNet is preferred.

Expression of Interest- Submittal Details: Prospective partners are invited to provide LakeNet with a brief letter (not to exceed three pages) stating their interest in the partnership; relevant experience and expertise; ideas/ innovations for assisting LakeNet through its leadership transition and future growth; and a commitment of office space and administrative/ program support (extent and duration) in anticipation of accessing new funding sources to cover these costs and provide for additional project-specific revenue. The letter of interest, in electronic format, should be submitted by 5:00 p.m. (Eastern) on October 30, 2006 to LakeNet at: drbarker@worldlakes.org.

The Board of Trustees will review Expression of Interest submissions and invite full proposals from and/or enter into detailed negotiations with selected applicants.

Questions on this solicitation are welcome and can be directed to the current LakeNet President, David Read Barker (drbarker@worldlakes.org or 410.268.5155) or to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Mike Donahue (michael_donahue@urscorp.com or 248.994.7431).