

**SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY (NMNH)  
DEPARTMENT OF VERTEBRATE ZOOLOGY**

**Curation and Digitization Services for Division of Fishes Larval Fish Collection  
Statement of Work**

**BACKGROUND**

The National Fish Collection has a comprehensive larval fish collection in vial storage at the Museum Support Center, Suitland, MD. Each individual vial represents a lot, which can include a single or multiple specimens of the same taxonomic identification that were collected on specific date at a given locality. Lots are stored in variety of small non-archival glass vials with failing closures that are susceptible to cracks, leading to fluid evaporation and specimen dehydration. Most of these vials are organized in cardboard boxes, and while a sizable percentage of the collection is identified to the family and or genus level, the collection is not inventoried, databased, or taxonomically organized. As such, this collection is not discoverable or easily accessible.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this contract is to make this collection available and known to the research community.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

The Contractor shall provide professional, technical, and non-personal services to the NMNH Division of Fishes to curate, digitize and install 10,000 non-inventoried larval fish lots into the National Fish Collection.

**TASKS**

The contractor shall provide the following services to the National Museum of NaturalHistory (NMNH) Division of Fishes:

**Task 1) Data and physical condition assessment**

- For each multi-lot larval fish box, determine if any specimens have been damaged due to evaporative dehydration, are missing specimens or lack sufficient locality or taxonomic data.
- Determine what samples can proceed to full curation and data capture.
- Partition lots with damaged specimens or incomplete data to a holding area where they can be assessed by Division of Fishes staff.

**Task 2) Data Capture**

- Data to be captured includes all available data on specimen labels [including but not limited to specimen(s) identification (family, genus, and/or species), number of specimens, accession number, collector, collection date, depth, ocean and/or

country, additional locality data, oceanographic data (vessel, cruise, station number) if available, and geocoded locality.] If the label only includes oceanographic data, the contractor will reference and capture the collection information from departmental station data sources.

- Entry of Collection Event records for any locality not already present in Fishes database, EMu.
- Assign USNM number to each larval lot.
- Assign lot to available larval tank for that family number.
- Print USNM wet specimen label for inclusion with corresponding lot.

### **Task 3) Physical Curation**

- Determine appropriate borosilicate replacement vial size.
- Verify ethanol concentration.
- Transfer specimens to new vial without damage.
- Place printed polyester label in appropriate position, with additional labels behind the primary USNM label.
- Fill remaining volume of vial with proper ethanol concentration and seal vial with appropriate batting.
- Place vial in proper larval tank.
- Label each larval tank.

### **Task 4) Collection installation and organization**

- Add vials to each larval tank until requisite capacity is reached. Swing space may be utilized to temporarily organize completed tanks.
- Install completed larval tanks in designated larval tank collection area, organizing tanks by family number and then sequentially by tank number.

### **Task 5) Reporting**

- Maintain Excel file documenting progress by date, including any relevant notes as deemed appropriate.

## **DELIVERABLES**

1. Lots assessed, curated, digitized, and installed shall be considered deliverables.
2. A monthly report, in the form of a spreadsheet, indicating number of lots processed.

## **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

Tentatively, the period of performance for this contract is scheduled to begin September 30, 2022 and will continue for no later than September 30, 2023.

## **PLACE OF PERFORMANCE**

Work to be completed at the Museum Support Center, Suitland, MD (MSC) during standard Division of Fishes business hours (Monday – Friday, excluding federal holidays or emergency closures, between the hours of 8:30 AM and 6:00 PM). Note that access to Smithsonian facilities may change depending on regional COVID-19 conditions. Telework will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The contractor will not receive paid holidays, vacations, sick days, travel time or other SI leave benefits.

Contractor will be expected to abide by all COVID-19 protocols in place at Smithsonian facilities, on the days that they are on site.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The work varies from sedentary to standing for prolonged periods; some lifting, twisting, and bending. Movement of vial boxes, small vials, fluid carboys and glassware supplies may be required. Good manual dexterity is required as objects and labels are small and difficult to handle.

### **COMMUNICATION OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS**

The Contractor shall be in contact with the Technical Points of Contact or COTR throughout all phases of the contract, meeting as needed by phone, video conference or email.

The COTR shall perform inspection and acceptance of all work performed by the Contractor, with acceptance in writing. The COTR has the right to reject any work considered unacceptable.

### **PAYMENT**

The contractor shall invoice the Smithsonian Institution once per month unless a different invoicing schedule is approved by both parties. The contractor will be paid based on the delivery of completed EMu catalog records and installation of fully curated larval fish lots.

Contractor has option to use the OCON invoice vendor form (SI-3726).

### **SMITHSONIAN-FURNISHED FACILITIES AND MATERIALS**

The Smithsonian will provide access to Smithsonian-owned computers for digital capture tasks but should telework be required it is expected that the contractor will provide his/her own running the MS-Windows operating system and Microsoft Excel, must meet OCIO computer security standards (if connecting remotely to NMNH network) and will have an external or cloud storage to backup work. Training of contractors and quality control will be provided by the Division of Fishes collection management staff. All curation supplies, including archival label stock, vials, jars, ethanol, printers, and network access will be provided by the Smithsonian. Smithsonian supplies and computers will be used for generating all labels.

### **SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The Smithsonian Institution requires background investigations and identification badges, also called credentials, for new employees and affiliated staff. Staff-only areas in Smithsonian facilities are access-controlled, using these badges. The NMNH and MSC workspaces where the work defined in this statement will take place are in badge-access-controlled parts of Smithsonian facilities.

Therefore, working with the Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) for this

contract, the contractor shall apply for a background investigation and SI credential through the Smithsonian Office of Protection Services (OPS) Personnel Security and ID Office (PSIO).

The Smithsonian Institution also requires an hour-long Computer Security Awareness Training (CSAT) for new employees and affiliated staff who will be utilizing Smithsonian computers and networks. As such, the contractor shall complete the required CSAT after securing a network account.

## **TRAVEL**

Apart from the contractor's transportation to and from the worksite at NMNH if working onsite, no other travel is anticipated for the completion of this contract. The contractor is responsible for all contractor transportation to and from the NMNH worksite, including costs related to driving and parking or mass transit. The contractor is also responsible for any costs related to temporary re-location if the contractor is not local to the DC metropolitan area but intends to work onsite at NMNH.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

The contractor may be in contact with the NMNH Department of Vertebrate Zoology and its personnel throughout the duration of the contract, meeting as needed in person at the NMNH worksites, or communicating via phone or email.

The [Contracting Officer's Technical Representative \(COTR\)](#) for this contract is:

Diane Pitassy, Museum Specialist  
National Museum of Natural History Smithsonian Institution  
Department of Vertebrate Zoology  
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