

Request for Proposals:

Development of a visual identity system for a non-profit educational organization

Organizational Overview

Montessori House of Children was founded in 1968 to provide Montessori education for children and youth in the London, Ontario area. Started by a group of committed parents seeking a proven alternative to traditional education, the school and its staff, curriculum and facilities were developed to create a child-centered environment that would lay the foundations for life-long learning, and prepare young adults to engage the world as active citizens and successful leaders.

Today, Montessori House of Children is one of the foremost Montessori schools in North America and the only accredited Montessori school in the London area. Our community comprises Toddlers to Grade 8 students supported by their families and more than 70 faculty and staff committed to the scientifically based and internationally recognized Montessori method. With a central location in downtown London, Montessori House of Children also operates satellite locations to extend its offering to families throughout the London area.

Montessori House of Children continues to provide an outstanding education through a commitment to academic excellence, development of the whole child, and active community participation. Our learning environment is purposefully designed to provide rich academic, social, cultural and physical experiences that build confidence, encourage independence, and awaken the full potential of each student.

Our mission

To provide a world-class Montessori education that promotes academic excellence and prepares children and young adults to engage the world as active citizens and successful leaders.

Montessori education is...

- A philosophy of educational excellence, supported by proven methods, materials, an engaging environment and trained educators
- Grounded in scientific principles of child and youth development (neural, emotional, cognitive and social)
- Purposefully designed academic, social, personal, physical and cultural experiences that encourage development of the whole child
- A superior curriculum that exceeds provincial standards
- A commitment to active community participation

Project Overview

The Montessori House of Children Board of Governors has identified Branding and Marketing-Communications as priorities for the execution of the School's strategic plan. Over the past year we undertook a comprehensive review and articulation of our mission, values, brand attributes and key messages, as well as an audit of our marketing-communications assets and visual identity.

As a result of the review, we are seeking the professional services of a Graphic Design and/or Marketing-Communications vendor to create a visual identity system solution that will articulate our compelling brand identity to internal and external audiences, and symbolize what differentiates the School from its public counterparts and private competitors.

Why are we doing this?

- to create a strong sense of the School - the value of its philosophy and approach to education
- to better articulate who we are, why we're here, what makes us special
- to identify what differentiates our School from competitive offerings in private education
- to reduce confusion about the School's offering amongst external audiences
- to enhance our image through the presentation of an appropriate professional image across a wide range of applications
- to create opportunities to strengthen our community through a clear sense of identity

What is our end goal?

- to introduce a new or refreshed visual identity to internal and external stakeholders by October 2011

Project scope & deliverables

A short-term contract for \$7,500 will be offered to develop visual identity/logo design options across a range of applications (e.g. website, collateral, print, signage, clothing, etc.), and refine the selected identity to final artwork based on stakeholder feedback. The expected start date of the contract is August 22, 2011; the expected termination date is October 31, 2011.

Who we are looking for:

- partners with specific skills and experience in corporate/visual brand identity
- collaborators who can help us to successfully communicate our brand promise
- professionals who will communicate with clarity and act with integrity

The selected vendor will be expected to:

- develop design directions - minimum of three (3) alternatives - and recommendations for our logo, wordmark and tagline; recommend possible naming solutions
- recommend how the identity might be applied to electronic and print media as well as promotional/recruitment materials, stationery, signage, clothing, etc.
- refine and develop an identity solution based on stakeholder feedback
- develop visual identity guidelines in a concise document that summarizes our brand identity, including final identity elements, acceptable b&w/colour treatments, fonts, usage guidelines, print and electronic stationery templates (e.g. email signature, letterhead, envelopes, business cards, powerpoint templates, etc.)
- produce and deliver final digital artwork for all identity elements

To support the work of the selected vendor, Montessori House of Children will provide:

- a brand brief articulating our brand promise, attributes and key messages
- background information and an overview of our current visual identity challenges
- key insights regarding our target audiences - internal and external
- samples of current electronic and printed materials where our identity appears
- access to our team, our insights and any information that will help you to help us

Proposal Requirements

Tell us about yourself/your organization

- describe your organization including your areas of expertise, relevant experience, philosophy, resources and anything else you feel will help us to understand who you are, what you offer and what makes you special
- provide samples and accompanying descriptions (optional) of your work; only work available in the public domain should be included
- share web links to your web presence and your portfolio, if applicable
- tell us about any work you have done in the education and non-profit sectors
- provide three (3) client references

Share your vision of how we will work together

- what is your proposed process for the development of our identity design directions and recommendations?
- how do you propose to allocate the budget?
- describe the resources (people, time, tools) that will be available for this project
- suggest a framework for how we will communicate, share information and progress toward the end goal
- tell us what you need from us

What we do not expect

- free graphic design or consulting services - we understand that your work has value
- a complete project plan created in isolation - we prefer a collaborative approach
- a lowest-cost approach to our project - we want the best solution we can afford

The Process

Five (5) hard copies and one (1) soft copy of your proposal must be received by 1pm on Friday August 12, 2011, and should be addressed to:

Chandra Peretic
% Montessori House of Children
711 Waterloo Street
London, Ontario
N6A 3W1

Soft copies of your proposal should be addressed to cperetic@montessori.on.ca.

Any questions about this RFP should be sent via email to cperetic@montessori.on.ca.

Short-listed vendors will be invited to an interview with our team on August 17, 2011 to discuss their proposals (no new materials/proposals may be presented at this time). We expect to negotiate and award the final contract during the last two weeks of August 2011.