



**COUNTY OF VENTURA
WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD**

Presents

**Marketing &
Public Relations**

**Request For Proposals
Program Year 2007-2008
(RFP #07MPR)**

Release Date: October 18, 2007

Proposal Due Date: November 15, 2007

Contract Start Date: January 2, 2008

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES

I. PURPOSE:

The Workforce Investment Board (WIB) of Ventura County is seeking proposals from qualified, experienced public relations firms to enhance the Board's communication strategy in promoting their role in the County's overall economic vitality and workforce development. Proposals are being accepted from marketing and public relations firms that demonstrate both an expertise in professional marketing and public relations work as well as a familiarity with the local economy and workforce issues. Interested bidders will demonstrate knowledge of local education and training programs available to job seekers and employers, exhibit strong linkages to local businesses and the public sector and demonstrate expertise in inter-agency collaboration.

The Workforce Investment Board may enter into a contract with the successful bidder for a term beginning January 2, 2008 through June 30, 2008, with possible annual renewals for two subsequent one-year periods at the discretion of the Workforce Investment Board and County Board of Supervisors.

Funding available for services described herein shall not exceed \$45,000.

II. BACKGROUND:

In partnership with the Board of Supervisors, the Ventura County Workforce Investment Board implements the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, oversees the County's Job & Career Centers and establishes programs in response to the needs of Ventura County employers. The WIB includes representatives from private businesses, education, labor, economic development and community based organizations. The Board of Supervisors appoints WIB members who serve as volunteers for two-year terms.

The WIB Goals and Priorities provide focus for the development of specific plans for the achievement of its performance objectives. The WIB has established three broad goals to guide its actions:

Goal 1: RELEVANCE

Job seeker readiness to respond to current and future employment opportunities in Ventura County.

Goal 2: QUALITY

Program content and service delivery to meet the needs and expectations of job seekers and employers in Ventura County.

Goal 3: SUSTAINABILITY

Partnerships to secure on-going support for workforce and business development in Ventura County.

Along with these broad goals, the WIB actively works to carry out these essential responsibilities:

- To articulate and express the workforce development needs of the community;
- To promote collaboration among the several local stakeholders in workforce preparation and development;
- To build consensus on workforce needs, issues and priorities;
- To provide current and accurate information on which to base decisions;
- To help define the important workforce issues in Ventura County, and
- To be an engaged advocate and decision-maker in the development of public policy decisions affecting the local workforce and business productivity.

To carry forward this agenda it is essential that the Workforce Investment Board have an effective communications strategy. That strategy involves the creation of a strong positive public image that encourages business participation in programs and generates support at the local, state, and federal level.

III. TARGET AUDIENCE/CUSTOMERS:

There is no single target audience for workforce development issues. Some identifiable target groups, however, include the following:

- Job-seekers and individuals seeking training to support career advancement;
- Employers who have a need for a trained workforce and for ready access to job-seekers;
- Training and education institutions involved both in general and continuing education and in vocational and career skills training specifically;
- Economic development officials and business advocates, both in the public and private sector, including chambers of commerce;
- Industry associations;
- Elected officials, at the local (city and county), state and federal levels;
- Government officials and other policy-makers;
- Organized Labor representatives and members;
- The media;
- Workforce Investment Board Members and staff
- The general public

The marketing plan and specific outreach and communication strategies must take into consideration each of these target audiences.

IV. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected firm will compellingly demonstrate that the work can and will be performed to the satisfaction of the WIB. The firm will be expected to work with WIB staff, WIB members and the WIB Marketing Committee to in the development and articulation of an overall marketing and outreach strategy to promote the program services and accomplishments of the WIB and the Job & Career Centers. The services required to assist the Workforce Investment Board in Marketing and Public Relations activities will include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

A. Creative Design, Production and Copywriting

1. Brochures (5)
2. Logo (1)
3. Flyers (5)
4. Annual Report (1)
5. Radio/Commercials: two (2) 60-sec; & TV commercials: two (2) 30-sec.

Note: Please submit samples of each category of work with proposal

B. Media Negotiation and Placement

1. Newspapers and Newsletters
2. English and Spanish Radio
3. Cable TV and Public Access Programming
4. Transit (bus, train)
5. Transit shelters/benches (bus, train)
6. Non-Traditional

Note: Please submit sample media plan

C. Public Relations

1. Press Releases (3) and Media Placements (3)
2. Public Service Announcements (3) & Placement
3. Broadcast Interviews (5)

Note: Please submit samples of press releases, media placements and public service announcements

D. Reporting Requirements

The contractor will submit regular reports to WIB staff to include the following:

1. Monthly Status Reports on all projects
2. Monthly Billing Summaries
3. Estimates and timelines prior to the onset of all projects

E. Place of Business

Contractor shall maintain an office and place of business domiciled within the designated contract area. Contractor shall maintain the place of business with the conveniences of a modern communications system for daily, local and regional representation.

F. Compensation

Funding level shall not exceed **\$45,000**. Printing expenses for marketing materials are not included in the funds identified for the services.

G. Performance of Similar Services

While it is understood that performance under the agreement will not represent the **only** work of the selected contractor, the contractor shall agree not to perform similar services for others that would result in a conflict of interest with the duties contractor is obligated to perform under this agreement during the contract term. Should an issue arise where clarification is required, contractor is obligated to consult the WIB Executive Director for a decision. Other corporate activities notwithstanding, contractor is required to be available at all reasonable times to meet the requirements of this agreement.

V. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS & PROPOSAL OUTLINE:

Responses to this Request for Proposals must address each of the following components:

1. Executive Summary Form: signed by an authorized representative of the applicant.
2. A brief description of all key personnel, sub-contractors and technical staff to be involved and their relationship to the services to be provided. The description will include names, titles, licenses/certificates, field(s) of expertise and the relevant contract area experience of the individuals who will perform the services. Complete resumes of all persons are to be included as an attachment to the proposal. The proposal shall identify a single point of contact for the proposed services.
3. A description of the bidders qualifications to perform the services as described in Section IV above. This can be accomplished by providing information on past (relevant) experience, client references and information on any proposed sub-contractors experience. Your response should include the following:
 - a. Three (3) client references. Clients must be within Ventura County and will have had a contract with the bidder within the previous two years. Reference information must include client name, primary contact person,

address, contract numbers, fax number, phone number and email and/or web address with a brief description of the services provided.

- b. Direct experience and expertise within the proposed service area should include various aspects of marketing and public relations including, but not limited to:
 - o Key business contacts
 - o Key corporate accounts within targeted industry sector groups
 - o Knowledge of Workforce Investment Board
 - o Business plan
 - o Advertising plan
 - o Special event coordination, press conferences
 - o Community outreach
4. Provide a general summary of the recommended service strategy, addressing the target audiences listed in Section III, above. Please limit this narrative to a maximum of 4 pages, double-spaced, 8 ½ x 11inch paper.
5. Bidders must identify their hourly service fee, billing practices, and a general estimate of the costs for providing services per the proposed strategy recommended in item 3 above. Provide any pertinent information that may help evaluate the proposal's cost effectiveness.
6. List any unique and valuable services your firm will be able to offer to the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) at no additional cost, as value-added services.

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA:

A panel of WIB members, recommended individuals with marketing linkages and Agency staff will review all proposals received prior to the application deadline and rank them against the following criteria:

- | | |
|--|--------|
| 1. Staff and firms' experience in marketing and public relations | 15 pts |
| 2. Marketing and subject matter expertise as it relates to the local economy, workforce issues, and related public policy | 25 pts |
| 3. Experience and ability to work collaboratively with a diverse set of local partners in economic development, education, vocational training, organized labor and local government . | 20 pts |
| 4. General statement or outline of strategy for promoting the goals of the Ventura County Workforce Investment Board | 20 pts |
| 5. Specific references from Ventura County area clients from the last 2 years | 10 pts |

6. Cost effectiveness
TOTAL

10 pts
100 pts

The review panel will score each proposal and submit scores to Workforce Administration. Workforce Administration will review the panelist's scores and develop a recommendation for the bidder whose proposal is determined to best meet the needs of the County, based on the evaluation criteria set forth herein. This recommendation will be presented to the Workforce Investment Board, and then to the County Board of Supervisors for approval of a contract.

The determination of the successful proposal will be based upon information supplied by the bidder in response to this RFP and upon other information that will be obtained by the evaluation team as deemed necessary. County and WIB reserve the right to consider other factors when making a funding recommendation. The County of Ventura Board of Supervisors, based upon a recommendation from the proposal evaluation team, will award a contract. **This Request For Proposals does not commit County to award a contract.**

CONTRACT TERMS

County of Ventura will negotiate a contract with the successful bidder. Standard terms and conditions will form the basis for contract negotiations. This RFP and the vendor's response shall also become part of the contracting process between County and the bidder. Payment will be based on contractor performance of the specific deliverables as described herein. Pay points and specific amounts for each deliverable will be negotiated with the successful bidder.

LITIGATION WARRANTY

A bidder, by submitting a proposal, warrants that it is not currently involved in litigation or arbitration concerning the materials or performance concerning the same or similar material. Disclosure will not automatically disqualify the vendor. County reserves the right to evaluate proposals based on the facts surrounding such litigation or arbitration.

VII. HOW TO APPLY:

Applications must be received by Human Services Agency no later than **4:00 PM, Thursday, November 15, 2007.** Postmarks are not satisfactory evidence of timely submittal; applications must be received by the deadline.

Applications should be addressed to Philip Bohan, Contracts & Grants Manager, 855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003. Please submit one original signature and six copies of the proposal. The proposal must be in hard copy format; electronic and fax copies will not be accepted in place of an original submittal.

Workforce Administration and the Workforce Investment Board reserve the right to reject any and all proposals. Should a contract award be recommended, however, it is

Marketing Scope of Work

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intended that a recommendation will be presented to the Workforce Investment Board Executive Committee on December 4, 2007, with contract approval by the Board of Supervisors shortly thereafter.

Copies of the Request for Proposals are available at:

County of Ventura, Human Services Agency
855 Partridge Drive, Ventura, CA 93003
or on the Web Site at:

www.vchsa.org

(Click on the "About Us" tab and select the RFP)

Questions about the Request for Proposals must be submitted in writing to Philip Bohan, no later than November 6, 2007 at the address noted above, by fax at (805) 477-5490 or by email to philip.bohan@ventura.org. Answers will be posted to the Human Services Agency website November 12, 2007.

CONTRACT AWARD/PROJECT TIMELINE

The selected organization will be notified of contract award recommendation the week of December 10, 2007. The organization should be prepared to meet with County staff for contract negotiation during that week. These target dates are subject to revision.

The project should commence no later than January 2, 2008 with project completion of all activities required no later than June 30, 2008. The initial contract will be for the period January 2, 2008 – June 30, 2008. Based on availability of funds, contractor performance outcomes during the first year of the contract and needs of the WIB and Board of Supervisors, the contract may be renewed up to two additional years.

RIGHT TO CANCEL

Workforce Administration reserves the right to modify the proposal process and timeline as is deemed necessary. The Workforce Investment Board reserves the right to reduce or cancel this procurement at any time up to, and including the awarding of a contract. Upon initiation of services provided under this contract, funding may be reduced or eliminated upon a thirty-day notice to the contractor in accordance with standard contract conditions.

VIII. PROTEST RIGHTS:

Upon written request, any unsuccessful bidder is entitled to an explanation as to why its proposal may have been irregular and/or the basis for the award of the contract to the successful bidder. Protests shall be in writing and received within ten (10) calendar days following the announcement of intent to award contract.

It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure receipt by County to the designated address. A postmark will NOT be accepted as meeting the deadline requirements. No extensions may be provided to this protest provision. Protests shall be addressed to:

Philip Bohan, Contracts & Grants Manager
Human Services Agency
855 Partridge Dr.
Ventura, CA 93003

The protest shall state the reason for the protest, citing the law, rule, regulation, or practice on which the protest is based. A written response will be sent to the protester within ten (10) working days after receipt of the written protest. Prior to the award of a contract, if any bidder files protest against the awarding of the contract, the contract may not be awarded until either the protest has been withdrawn or HSA has decided the matter.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Human Services Agency – County of Ventura

General Proposal Conditions:

1. All costs of proposal preparation and pre-funding activities shall be borne by the proposer. The County shall not in any event be liable for any expenses incurred by the proposer in the preparation and/or late submission of the proposal. The proposer shall not include any such expenses as part of the proposed budget.
2. The proposal shall include the proposer's best terms and conditions. Submission of the proposal shall constitute a firm and fixed offer to the County that will remain open and valid for a minimum of 90 days from the submission deadline.
3. Unnecessarily elaborate or lengthy proposals or other presentations beyond those needed to give a sufficient and clear response to all of the RFP requirements are not desired.
4. The proposal must set forth the accurate and complete information as required in this RFP document. Unclear, incomplete and/or inaccurate documentation may render the proposal ineligible for contract award.
5. A bidder's proposal may be withdrawn personally by written request or FAX prior to the scheduled closing time for receipt of the applications.
6. The County reserves the right to extend the submission deadline should such action be in the interest of the County. Proposers have the right to review their proposals in the event the deadline is extended.
7. The County reserves the right to withdraw this RFP without prior notice. The County makes no representation that any contract will be awarded to any offer received in response to this RFP.
8. Proposals shall be reviewed and/or rated by the County as submitted. No changes or additions may be made by the proposer after the deadline for receipt of proposals.
9. The County reserves the right to verify the information in the proposal. If the information in the proposal can be verified, or if errors uncovered are determined not to be willful, the County reserves the right to reduce the rating points awarded.
10. If a proposer knowingly and willfully submits false data, the County reserves the right to reject that proposal. If it is determined that a contract is awarded as a result of false data submitted in response to this RFP, County reserves the right to terminate that contract unilaterally.
11. A proposer may not be recommended for funding, regardless of the merits of the proposal submitted, if it has a history of contract noncompliance with the County or any other funding source, or current disputed or disallowed costs with County or any other funding source.
12. If the Contractor performs successfully the County reserves the option to extend the contract for an additional two program years (PY) or the maximum period allowable by the Department of Labor (DOL) or the State. The initial proposal shall be considered a binding part of any subsequent contract and/or period, except for specific areas of modification set forth in the contract extension.

13. County reserves the right to retain all submitted proposals and the proposals shall become the property of the County. The County has a right to any or all ideas presented in the proposals submitted in response to this RFP without change or limitation.

Selection or rejection of a proposal does not affect these rights. All proposals will be considered public documents, subject to review and inspection by the public at the County's discretion, in accordance with the Public Records Act.

14. The proposer shall be required to negotiate a contract with the County on an offer/acceptance basis as part of the funding approval process. The negotiation process shall be bound by the best terms and conditions originally offered in the proposal. The County reserves the right to make a contract award contingent upon acceptance by the proposer of certain special conditions. The contract offer of the County may contain additional terms or terms different from those set forth therein (i.e., "high risk" funding restrictions).
15. As part of the offer/counter offer negotiation process, County reserves the right to fund all or portions of the bidder's proposal.
16. If only one proposal is received and it is deemed that such proposal meets requirements for funding, County reserves the option to award such entity a contract on a sole source basis.
17. In the event no proposals are received, or proposals received do not meet requirements for funding under this RFP, or all funds are not awarded under this RFP, County reserves the right to be the contractor of last resort, or to designate another qualified entity to operate the program on a sole-source basis.
18. Ex Parte Communication Rule: It is County of Ventura policy to discourage ex parte communications with any person serving as an evaluator, including members of the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and County of Ventura Board of Supervisors, during the Evaluation process. Evaluators will not solicit or receive any oral communication from any potential contractor regarding any proposal under consideration, except at an open committee, WIB or Board public hearing. Any written communication to an evaluator from potential contractors will be forwarded to the Contracts & Grants Manager of the Human Services Agency.

COUNTY OF VENTURA

WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Executive Summary

Marketing & Public Relations

(RFP # 07MPR)

Bidder's Legal Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____

Funding Requested: \$ _____

Briefly summarize your proposed program. You may use one additional page:

I certify that this proposal meets all conditions of the RFP #07MPR.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Title: _____

Authorized Signature _____