

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. Description of Proposal

This document constitutes a Request for Proposal (RFP), in a competitive, sealed format, from qualified individuals and organizations to perform the scope of services defined herein. This request is an offer by the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation (RIEDC) to purchase, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP, the services proposed by the successful offeror(s), by contract, as needed.

Responses to this RFP are due no later than 4:30 p.m. on June 19, 2009.

1.1 The Offeror shall provide a proposal, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth herein, to provide services to the RIEDC from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2011 as follows:

- Provide media relations support for the RIEDC.
- Provide public relations support for the RIEDC.
- Serve as a strategic advisor to RIEDC's Executive Director, communications and marketing team.
- Assist in the coordination and production of events associated with RIEDC's economic development programs, services and activities.
- Produce press releases, op-eds and other written materials as directed.
- Assist the RIEDC's communications department as needed.
- Support the agency in its advertising and marketing initiatives, with a special emphasis on the agency's tourism division
- Provide creative development and art direction for advertisements, etc. This includes advertising production for print, broadcast and web.
- Conduct multi-media planning and buying, and market research.
- Provide account management for overall RIEDC communications as well as for tourism-specific communication efforts.

1.2 All questions concerning this procurement should be directed to Meghan O'Connor, Senior Communications and Market Development Coordinator, 401-278-9146 or moconnor@riedc.com

II. **Background**

The RIEDC mission is to strengthen the Rhode Island economy through policies, programs, and projects which will enhance the business environment in order to promote prosperity for all of our citizens. Toward this end, the RIEDC offers real estate and site selection services, workforce development and training programs, financial and capital assistance, urban and enterprise zone initiatives, research and development, federal contract assistance, and tourism services.

The tourism division is the official state entity responsible for promoting domestic and international tourism to Rhode Island. It conducts comprehensive marketing and communications efforts aimed at expanding the state's multi-billion dollar tourism industry. The division conducts the only marketing effort aimed at attracting visitors to all tourism regions of the state. The tourism division is overseen by RIEDC.

III. **Scope of Services**

- 3.1 Offeror will provide RIEDC with consulting services as mutually agreed upon and described in a proposal statement of work which will govern any particular assignment that is engaged under this RFP.
- 3.2 The Statement of Work shall be drafted as an engagement letter between the parties setting forth the following:
 - a. a complete and detailed description of the type(s) of services to be rendered by the Offeror;
 - b. the applicable billing rates for the services to be rendered ("Service Fees");
 - c. any additional terms and conditions to which the parties may agree.

IV. **Process and Requirements**

- 4.1 Offerors will submit their proposals within the timeframe indicated. RIEDC is committed to selecting the most competitive offer. Our evaluation will be geared to identify those proposals which offer the best combination of expertise and value. RIEDC will not, however, base its evaluation solely on price and reserves the right to make an award to an Offeror who may not necessarily be the lowest bidder.

- 4.2 No extension in the submittal date will be granted on an individual basis. If RIEDC determines that the timeframe it has established for this RFP is inadequate, it may, at its option, extend the submission deadline for all Offerors.
- 4.3 Offerors agree that their proposals are a firm agreement to provide services at a stipulated rate to RIEDC. Those rates will be reflected in the Statement of Work engagement letter. All pricing schedules quoted in response to this RFP, however, must remain in effect for one (1) year at a minimum and may, at the election of the Offeror, be guaranteed for three (3) years.
- 4.4 Offeror may withdraw their proposal at any time by notifying Meghan O'Connor in writing of their intention to do so.

V. **Awards**

- 5.1 Offeror shall have the capability, experience, and expertise to provide the RIEDC with services in accordance with the requirements set forth herein and consistent with the representations made in the submission under this RFP.
- 5.2 RIEDC reserves the right to reject any or all portions of an individual proposal, reject all proposals, or reissue the entire RFP, in its sole discretion.
- 5.3 Selection of the approved vendor will be substantially based on the criteria delineated in section VII (Evaluation Criteria).

VI. **Proposal Format**

- 6.1 Five copies of each proposal shall be submitted to the RIEDC.
- 6.2 RIEDC will not provide any reimbursement for any cost associated with the development or presentation of a proposal.
- 6.3 Failure to include any of the following information may have an adverse impact on the evaluation of a proposal:
 - a. Offeror should complete Attachment A (Questionnaire).
 - b. Inclusion of client information or references that reflect upon the Offeror's consulting expertise or experience is desirable.

- c. Proposal should be prepared in a standard 8 ½ x 11 format and adequately bound.
- d. Table of contents and an executive summary of the proposal should be included.
- e. A fee schedule for work proposed under the RFP should be included.

VII. Evaluation Criteria

Each proposal submitted will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- a. Offeror's past experience and performance on comparable work and assignments.
- b. Qualifications and experience of the firm's professional staff.
- c. Commitment of the firm to equal opportunity and diversity.
- d. Proposed cost or applicable fee schedule for the contract period.
- e. Quality of professional and/or client references.

As noted, Offerors may be asked to participate in an interview process after submission of all proposals to the RIEDC, at the option of the selection committee. Ultimate selection to the approved vendor list will be made by RIEDC in its sole discretion.

ATTACHMENT A

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Provide the full name, address, and federal employer identification number for your firm.
2. Give all of the relevant contact information for the individual at your firm who will be responsible for coordinating with the RIEDC on this proposal.
3. Describe briefly your firm's history, organization, management, and philosophy.
4. Indicate how long your firm has been engaged in advertising/marketing/public relations projects of the type specified in this RFP and for whom.
5. Indicate what special expertise you bring to this project.
6. Specify the individual(s) within your firm who would be responsible for assignment to the RIEDC account and give a statement of qualifications for each.
7. Summarize, if applicable, any prior firm experience for similar work performed for a public sector or quasi-public agency like the RIEDC.