

Request for Proposal

Winter Guard International (WGI) is soliciting responses from qualified consultants to submit a detailed proposal for the development of a comprehensive training and educational program to include such things as: the production of training videos and web based content, the development of instructor, judge and member education programs; and the establishment of relationships with other educational organizations.

Background

Winter Guard International, a non-profit youth organization based in Dayton, Ohio, is the leading governing body of the winter guard and indoor percussion activities. It brings music to life through performance in a competitive format by sponsoring regional contests and an annual world championship contest for both activities. Now entering its 32nd year, WGI continues to evolve and grow. There were over 11,000 participants at the WGI World Championships this past April.

WGI exists to foster positive experiences for all who participate, by promoting education, creativity and freedom of expression through the unification of pageantry and performing arts. WGI uses a competition-based approach for organizing events in order to showcase youth activities in pursuit of high standards of achievement.

WGI is governed by a Board of Directors composed of representatives from the top color guards and indoor percussion ensembles in the world, and "At Large" positions for individuals who bring their professional experiences to share with the organization.

Education is the basis for the developmental criteria, which defines the measurement for competitive advancement. WGI provides curriculum materials for classes in equipment, movement, and design. WGI currently provides educational programs for instructors and judges through seminars and video material.

Services to be provided

It is anticipated that the scope of the proposal will include the following:

1. Assessment of the current WGI training/educational programs and materials.
2. A review of the goals of the organization with respect to its training and educational efforts as outlined in the attached supporting document.
3. Development of a plan for the formation, staffing and short and long term implementation of a revised training and educational program with the potential development of a position such as Director of Training in mind.

Additional details regarding the background of this Request for Proposal and its scope can be found in the attached document.

Ideally, the person or persons responding to this request would have some background or familiarity with the activities serviced by WGI. A formal background in education, educational methods, curriculum development and management would also be considered extremely useful. The response should include the resume and/or curriculum vitae of the person or persons responding. If the response is being submitted on behalf of a group, a primary contact person for the group should be identified.

The response should also include a proposed time line for completion of the project which should include the establishment of milestones for various stages along the way. It is anticipated that the party selected will prepare a written report upon completion of the project that will be delivered to the Executive Director of WGI and the Board of Directors. A presentation to the Board of Directors may also be requested.

The proposal should also include a detailed fee estimate. Your fee estimate should incorporate the following assumptions:

- ▶ The project will be performed during the spring of 2009 with an anticipated preliminary report to be submitted on or before March 15, 2009, and a final selection tentatively set for May 2009.
- ▶ Your fee estimate should include all costs and estimated expenses.

Submission and Selection

Proposals pursuant to this request must be submitted by March 15, 2009, and may be submitted by email or by mail to the WGI office. Email submissions should be sent to RFP@wgi.org.

All proposals will be reviewed by the Executive Director and appropriate WGI staff members together with a subcommittee from the Board of Directors. A decision with respect to the selection of the appropriate proposal is tentatively set for May 2009.

As mentioned above, one of the potential results of the work being requested might be the recommendation to create and staff a position within WGI such as a Director of Training. Individuals responding to this Request for Proposal would not be barred or discouraged from subsequently applying for such a position, if created.

If additional information is needed, please contact Fred Feeney at 228-365-6999 or RFP@wgi.org.

Information Supporting
Request for Proposal from
the WGI Board of Directors

January 12, 2009

SUMMARY STATEMENT

In July 2007, an area of priority was identified by the Board of Directors as **“WGI being THE resource educationally for color guard and indoor percussion”**. Fulfilling this leadership role includes a responsibility to develop the educational elements of these two activities.

The Board has determined that should take action to being exploring ways to redefine what has been known as the WGI Education Department and its functions within the organization. As a part of this redefinition, it is important to remember three areas where the organization can impact and therefore define training or “education”:

1. Instructor/designer/manager (how to teach/design/manage/recruit)
2. Judge/System (Judge training and system changes)
3. Performer (actual technique and methods)

There has been primary and secondary research showing there is a strong desire for WGI to support the growing need for instructor and performer education. There is currently a void in the marching arts community in the area of educational resources, training and curriculum.

WGI will take steps to determine what resources will be required to develop a comprehensive training/education department that meets the needs of the indoor guard and percussion community now and in the future and that will foster and promote the activity at all levels.

Excerpts from the Education Subcommittee Report to the Board of Directors

What do we mean when we say education?

Many throughout our organization have different ideas about what should be included when we discuss education. Who are we trying to educate? Or rather, who should we service and how? Through the years our educational efforts and programs have focused primarily on the judging community.

The structure we currently have in place arose from the needs during our very early days when less than 100 color guard units attended the Championships and we were trying to unite judges from all over the country with different degrees of training, different philosophies and at times who even used different scoring systems. We had significantly fewer units, fewer instructors, designers and a need to try to get the people who were judging the activity on the same page.

The current situation is much different. There are hundreds perhaps even thousands of units who compete at the A class level or below. Only a relatively small percentage of those even attend WGI regionals. The same is true in percussion only the growth there is perhaps occurring even faster.

While the need to educate judges is still great, that situation is also much different than it was 25 or 30 years ago. The scoring system has remained stable for many years. Judges at all levels travel extensively and get much greater exposure to different parts of the country then even before.

Another historical function of our Education Department was to examine the state of the activity, the judges system and work with the instructor members of the Task Force (Steering Committee) in developing any needed changes to set the direction of the activity.

This is still a valuable exercise; however, the reality is that there have been no significant or radical changes in our system or the philosophy in many years. The function of that committee certainly should be re-examined but that is not a subject to be covered here.

While education of judges is still an important function, the results of the recent survey suggest that this is not the most pressing need facing WGI.

Examples of results from the survey which support these conclusions are as follows:

“While I believe that WGI has worked very hard to improve the teaching quality of its instructors, I still see a lot of students graduate HS and

become primary directors [with] no idea of how to be one. I would love to see a required training of some kind for people who have no teaching experience and want to be a primary instructor for an organization.”

“Spinfest was a very educational event. I would like to see more assistance provided with the ‘how’ aspect of instruction.”

“I STRONGLY agree with the statement that there needs to be more education on HOW to teach rather than WHAT to teach. I have been writing and staging for over 7 years now and I realize that is not in any way a lengthy amount of time, but I have been very receptive to growing as an instructor. A vast majority of the ‘up and comers’ in the teaching community are very young, and I feel they need a little guidance.”

“There needs to be a focus on ‘teaching’ rather than just on equipment and movement. Many young instructors DON’T know HOW to teach, how to develop their own style and identity in the activity and just re-hash things they learned as performers. Young designers NEED TO KNOW THE BASICS from an educational standpoint.”

“I would very much like to see more instruction available to new instructors - both in how to teach skills, how to teach/lead in general and how to develop the fine young men and women....”

“Education on how to teach is VERY important to me ... I pride myself on being able to get my students to be able to do things that they would not normally attempt and it’s all in communication. Some of the newer instructors that I have encountered need to be educated on how to get someone to spin correctly AND not just spin. I would be a strong supporter of such an endeavor.”

“Our WGI experiences have been wonderful. I have emailed many times trying to find out where I can get educational materials I am able to keep & never received a response in reference to this. I would like someone to contact me [about] where I can get educational materials. And, a list of these particular materials, as well. Thank you.”

“Please take a look at broadening your educational horizons. There is so much help that is needed in terms of professionalism, respect, and basic managerial skills that people have no idea about and WGI could be helping so much more.”

“In response to the last item on question 14—I have seen so many young

instructors in this activity who possess the performance and technical skills that are necessary to develop a guard program but are simply clueless when it comes to the educational aspects.”

“In more recent years I have learned how to be an educator of this activity than a teacher and the question of how to teach rather than what you teach to me is one of the most important details left out of our activity especially with young instructors. I would love to see more done in this area.”

“WGI should help develop Color Guard Instruction and Drumline instruction in educational curriculums at universities. My negative experiences ALL revolve around talented people who are young but uneducated and naive about teaching. These individuals are focused on their own self promotion and not the education aspects the activity.”

“More educational materials, updated more often!! Newer design help, especially for A class!!”

“As an educator of young children, I really feel that WGI instructors needs to have a better understanding HOW people learn, not just the fundamentals of the activity. How to get through to marching members, and how to make this activity as special for them as possible. I truly believe that the kids in this activity sometimes are the forgotten ones.”

“I would like to see more opportunities for performers and instructional staff to learn how to teach. In some cases the instructional staff at the high school level can turn kids off from the activity because of their teaching style or lack of. If they can learn the impact their own actions have I think more kids would be interested.”

“What are the programs for getting past performers to instruct? There is certainly a need-desire for color guard/winterguard, but nothing to teach teachers and begin new programs.”

Separating the functions into training/education for instructors and training/education for judges has made sense in the past but it may be too limiting for a variety of reasons. One way to look at this might be to separate the functions into instructor/performer education and then one branch of education that looks at the philosophy, direction of the activity, development of the judging system and the corresponding education of the judging community. Our discussion specifically mentioned this as encompassing three levels, (1) Instructor, (2) judge and (3) performers. Two of these, instructor and member would be considered external to WGI while judge education, at least for WGI judges, could be considered internal.

In the color guard community currently educational efforts include the following:

- ▶ Spinfest - As we all know this is a very recent development and has been extremely successful. The survey results indicate the community wants to have more of these types of functions.
- ▶ Judges Meeting for WGI judges only
- ▶ Judges Academy at World Championships
- ▶ Educational videos - Through the years WGI has produced and is currently marketing a number of educational videos. Some of these are very good while others are outdated. Here is a link to the videos currently being sold and marketed by WGI. <http://www.wgi.org/store/catalog/Educational-12-1.html>
- ▶ Local Color Guard clinics - When asked WGI will assist in staffing the clinics sponsored by the local circuit or judges association. This was something that WGI did frequently 15 years ago but WGI is not currently called upon to assist with these clinics on a frequent basis as the local circuits do this on their own. One of the primary concerns of this approach, however, is the consistency of the delivery of the philosophy.
- ▶ Conventions - Many years ago WGI hosted conventions that were usually associated with a judges' meeting. We have not done this in several years and Spinfest has taken the place of a convention.
- ▶ Video clips - Another fairly recent development posted on the Instructor webpage.

On the percussion side the WGI educational efforts include:

- ▶ Percussion judges meeting usually held in January.
- ▶ Educational videos - The only one thus far is the Visual Buzz Percussion Educational DVD.
- ▶ Video clips - As above another recent development which is definitely a step in the right direction.

This discussion recognized the differences between the Percussion community and the Color Guard community. As we all know, one can get a degree in music performance or education with an emphasis in percussion. Also, there are numerous avenues already established for percussion education at many levels including PAS. In addition, many of our sponsors also make an effort of presenting educational programs and often include some educational materials through their website and offer clinician services. Also several individuals involved with our competitive organizations offer different types of educational programs. In discussing the programs offered by sponsors and others it was the general feeling that there were many opportunities to offer educational

programs specific to the indoor activity and that these programs would not compete with the programs already offered by our sponsors. All of this is simply to point out that there are and will be differences in how educational programs should be customized to fit both communities.

How will educational programs be delivered in the future?

Thus far our efforts have primarily focused on either face to face meetings or the development of videos/DVDs. What is the future of DVDs in this area? Should our current DVDs be available online? Should we look at the development of online programs?

The consensus of the committee is that WGI should quickly start to develop a variety of programs using the available technology. The traditional classroom method of instruction seems like it will be the exception not the rule in the future. While face to face instruction requiring travel to a destination for programs such as Spinfest will still be necessary, we must look at other delivery methods for our educational programs. Certainly, more colleges are offering degree programs or at least allowing students to meet certain class requirements through online programs. Also continuing education in a variety of fields can be accomplished through online classes. While WGI should be the leader of the pageantry arts in these areas, in many ways we are already behind the curve in development of these types of programs. Development of a variety of online programs for all 3 levels of education should be a strong focus of the Training/Education Department.

What is out there already?

- ▶ What are other pageantry organizations doing in education? What are their educational programs? Are they working? Are they meeting the needs? This is an area that needs more research.
- ▶ We should also identify other organizations, groups, individuals/websites who are offering what we would term educational materials/information. How are they doing it? What are they doing well?
- ▶ Are there partnership opportunities we should explore?

How do we legitimize who we are and the value of our programs?

Within the pageantry activity WGI has been recognized in the past as the leader in judge education and in the development of the current scoring systems, which are seen as being based on educational principles. The committee discussed ways that WGI could maintain that position both within and beyond the pageantry community. This discussion included:

- ▶ Development of an instructor certification curriculum. The Committee discussed this topic at length and determined that this concept was something that should be implemented. This included a discussion of whether or not any type of certification would be considered mandatory. We do not believe WGI could mandate that instructors be certified but the committee believes strongly that WGI should offer this as a service to the activity. We cannot guarantee that an instructor who is certified will be a good teacher or designer any more than a college can guarantee that a music education major will be a good band director or than the local hospital can guarantee that someone who is certified in CPR will actually be able to save a life. However, a certification process is a legitimate educational endeavor for WGI.
- ▶ Development of an accepted high school and middle school color guard/indoor percussion curriculum. A color guard “How To” manual was developed several years ago but never published and it is unknown if that material would be what is needed for curriculum development.
- ▶ Many school districts offer both color guard and indoor percussion as classes currently. Do we really know what they are doing in terms of curriculum or lesson plans? WGI should take an active role in researching this information and developing it as a resource.
- ▶ Development of a curriculum for college level courses for color guard instructors. (As mentioned above, a general curriculum already exists for the percussion field.) Much like colleges offer drill writing or other outdoor marching band classes, we should help promote and develop classes in color guard and indoor percussion. Is anyone doing this now? If someone wanted to be a color guard instructor/teacher what should such a degree require?
- ▶ WGI currently attends the Midwest clinic and other clinics for music educators but are we on the programs for those clinics? We learned that WGI was asked to present a program at the Texas Music Educators Convention last summer and used a current world class instructor/designer as a clinician. Our Education Department needs to be actively involved in those efforts.
- ▶ Also, articles are occasionally written in publications normally read by band directors about the benefits of winter guard or indoor percussion but those efforts are often by individuals with no formal link to WGI. We should be leading these types of discussions.

The committee also discussed looking at getting on the program of national conventions for school administrators. Instead of just talking to band directors and music educators, WGI should be making presentations to principals and superintendents about why their school system should support and fund winter guard or indoor percussion programs.

Education or Marketing

- ▶ The committee acknowledged that, to a certain extent, “education” about WGI would also be considered marketing. Letting others know who we are and why we are something beneficial for their students - could be considered both marketing and education.
- ▶ We also believe there are opportunities for WGI to generate income through these educational programs. However, we did not strongly consider these programs to be an additional income stream but believe that we would be accomplishing part of our not-for-profit mission by having the programs pay for themselves and the resources they will require.

Restructuring

After considerable discussion the committee strongly believes that development of a department within WGI to manage, promote, research and bring to fruition new programs and directives in the area of training/education is essential. This could include a full time or part time employee whose efforts would be dedicated to coordinating training/education in both the color guard and percussion communities and who would be required to work closely with other departments within WGI, possibly work with existing programs and would have to be someone with working knowledge of both areas. Responsibilities of this department might ultimately include

- ▶ planning and coordination of education events including the content of such events;
- ▶ coordination of the content and production of online and other multimedia programs and products;
- ▶ the continued ongoing development of new education programs;
- ▶ curriculum development, creation of instructor certification and continuing education programs; and
- ▶ communication with school districts, state departments of education and other educational and music education (ex. NAMM, MENC) organizations;

Apart from the possible separation of instructor/member education responsibilities from those related to philosophy and judge education, the committee anticipates that the scope of duties in this department could quickly grow to include programs not yet anticipated requiring additional personnel in the future.

What resources will it take to accomplish the recommendations that this committee ultimately makes? What restructuring, if any, would have to occur to accomplish these goals? These are issues which will require additional discussion and research.

Grants/Grant Writers

This may seem like an unrelated discussion but if we are truly interested in providing educational services there are state and/or federal grants available to help develop these programs. Grants are also available from various foundations for educationally based programs which we should explore. What would it take to get these funds? This is an area where an outside consultant may be beneficial. WGI should look for someone with grant writing experience to write grant applications possibly on some sort of contingency basis. This is an area for continued discussion.

Conclusion

WGI is made up of unique activities and is therefore in a unique position to address the needs of its members and potential members. While the vision outlined in this document may seem far reaching, the committee does not expect these goals to be reached immediately. However, the scope of this vision also should not serve as motivation to shy away from these goals.