



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Solicitation For: Direct Marketing and Media Strategy

5/17/2017

Response Due Date: 5/26/2017

A. Purpose

The purpose of this RFP is to select a vendor that can satisfy direct marketing and media requirements for promotion of the Workforce Ready Grant.

B. Background

The Indiana Commission for Higher Education (CHE) and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) are responsible for administering the Workforce Ready Grant Program. CHE is a 14-member public body created in 1971 to define the missions of Indiana's colleges and universities, plan and coordinate the state's postsecondary education system, and ensure that Indiana's higher education system is aligned to meet the needs of students and the state. The DWD oversees multiple workforce development and training programs spanning the issues of career and technical education, including adult basic education, postsecondary education, employment training/placement, high school dropout prevention, and re-entry initiatives for ex-offenders.

Indiana's Workforce Ready Grant (SEA 198-2017) will pay the cost for working-age Hoosier adults (18-55) who have not completed education and training beyond high school to pursue a high-wage, high-demand certificate through Ivy Tech Community College or Vincennes University. Grants will be available beginning with the 2017-18 academic year with the associated marketing beginning in July 2017. The marketing strategy must be two-fold: 1) Encouraging individual Hoosier adults to take advantage of the Workforce Ready Grant and 2) Engaging employers in high-demand sectors to skill up their employees with further education and training with support from the State of Indiana. High-demand industry sectors supported by the Workforce Ready Grant include: 1) Advanced Manufacturing, 2) Business & Construction, 3) Health & Life Sciences, 4) IT & Business Services, and 5) Transportation & Logistics.

The services sought in this RFP are to support CHE and DWD with their obligations under this project and this law, including the direct outreach, triage of responses, and the reporting of data to the General Assembly.

C. Services Sought

CHE seeks the following services with the support of DWD. Please itemize your bid by service provided, separating agency costs from deliverable costs:

1. Marketing Strategy and Timeline

- a. Development of a marketing strategy and implementation timeline using paid media and PSAs to encourage working-age (18-55) Hoosier adults who have not completed education beyond high school to apply for the new Workforce Ready Grant (and related state programs).

- i. Marketing should target individuals regionally and by county, taking into account growing career sectors and high-value employment options in each area.
- b. Marketing to engage Indiana employers in skilling up their existing workforce and strengthening their talent pipeline through the postsecondary education and training.
 - i. Marketing to employers should prioritize industry sectors supported by the Workforce Ready Grant: 1) Advanced Manufacturing, 2) Business & Construction, 3) Health & Life Sciences, 4) IT & Business Services, and 5) Transportation & Logistics.

Media Buy

- a. Develop and manage paid media buy, including but not limited to:
 - i. Digital advertising, including options for social media and search ads.
 - ii. TV and radio PSAs.
 - iii. Other traditional and non-traditional channels as recommended for target demographics.
 - iv. SEO strategy for Workforce Ready Grant application website.
- b. Produce monthly and end-of-campaign reports indicating rate of success for each method as well as CTR and impressions.

2. Print Materials

- a. Development of creative assets and printing materials, including:
 - i. Rack card/brochure
 - ii. Posters
 - iii. Postcards/direct mail materials

This marketing campaign must reach intended audiences statewide, by county and region, beginning July 2017 and running through December 2017.

D. Question/Inquiry Process

All questions/inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing by the deadline of 5 p.m. on Monday May 22, 2017. Questions/inquiries must be submitted in Attachment A, Q&A Template, via email to youcangoback@che.in.gov and must be received by the time and date indicated above.

Following the question/inquiry due date, the Q&A document will be posted to the Commission for Higher Education's website. If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, or if additional information is necessary for a clearer interpretation of provisions of this RFP prior to the due date for proposals, an addendum will be posted to the website as well. The Commission for Higher Education may extend the due date and time of proposals to accommodate such additional information requirements, if required.

E. Response Requirements

All proposals must be received at the email address in section I below no later than the Response Due Date listed above. Responses are limited to no more than 15 pages, excluding appendices, and must include description of the entity interested in providing the services, including:

- History of company, services, experience
- Explanation of similar work performed

- Description for each component of work outlined above:
- Itemized price estimate/budget for services, including travel fees
- References

F. Pricing

Pricing on this RFP must be firm and remain open for a period of not less than 180 days from the proposal due date. Any attempt to manipulate the format of the document, attach caveats to pricing, or submit pricing that deviates from the current format will put your proposal at risk. If the proposal is accepted, the pricing must remain firm during the term of the contract.

G. Terms

Funding for this project will come from state funds. Vendors must be able to agree to the terms and conditions of the Commission’s standard Professional Services Agreement (sample appended to this document). Vendors must be registered with the Indiana Secretary of State’s Office (vendors may do so at <http://www.in.gov/sos/business/3648.htm>). All payments will be 35 days in arrears and via ACH/electronic deposit from the Indiana Auditor of State’s Office. Invoices must detail expenses and charges in accordance with any purchase orders issued; total payment shall not exceed the accepted bid amount. Any and all travel reimbursed via this contract will be subject to the reimbursement rates of Financial Management Circular 20014-1 (vendors should review at http://www.in.gov/sba/files/FMC_2014-1.pdf).

H. Scoring Criteria

Responses will be reviewed by Commission staff for completeness and compliance with each of the requirements outlined in **Section D. Response Requirements**. Any questions about omissions from a proposal will be referred to the applicant. If, in the judgment of the Commission, a proposal is late, incomplete or does not adhere to or address the guidelines set forth, the response will be omitted from the review process. The Commission may request revision to proposal and budget prior to approval, award or release of funding. The decision of the Commission is final, and applicant will be notified in writing.

The following weights will be used to score each section **except** the last paragraph noted in Section B. Therefore, the scoring will apply to the following areas:

Criteria	Points
History of company, services, experience	10
Explanation of similar work performed	30
Description of work to be performed	20
Itemized price estimate for services, including travel fees	40
Total	100

I. Communication with the Commission for Higher Education

All communication, including responses, questions concerning the services being sought, or the response requirements, should be directed to:

youcangoback@che.in.gov

317-232-1030

J. Timeline

- To be considered, responses must be received by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education via email **no later than 5 p.m. on May 26, 2017.** Reference **RFP-02**. Confirmation of receipt will be sent.
- Questions/Inquiries must be received by 5 p.m. on May 22, 2017, in which answers will be posted to the website by 5 p.m. on May 24, 2017.
- Determinations of proposals will be issued no later than 5 p.m. on May 31, 2017.
- On-going communication between the vendor and Commission staff is expected throughout to discuss the resources and ask any clarifying questions.

K. Confidential Information

Respondents are advised that materials contained in proposals are subject to the Access to Public Records Act (APRA), IC 5-14-3 *et seq.*, and, after the contract award, the entire RFP file may be viewed and copied by any member of the public, including news agencies and competitors. Respondents claiming a statutory exception to the APRA must indicate so in the Transmittal Letter. Confidential Information must also be clearly marked in a separate folder on any included CD-ROM. The Respondent must also specify which statutory exception of APRA that applies. The State reserves the right to make determinations of confidentiality. If the Respondent does not identify the statutory exception the Procurement Division will not consider the submission confidential. If the State does not agree that the information designated is confidential under one of the disclosure exceptions to APRA, it may seek the opinion of the Public Access Counselor. Prices are not confidential information.

L. Taxes

Proposals should not include any tax from which the State is exempt.

M. Conflict of Interest

Any person, firm or entity that assisted with and/or participated in the preparation of this RFP document is prohibited from submitting a proposal to this specific RFP. For the purposes of this RFP “person” means a state officer, employee, special state appointee, or any individual or entity working with or advising the State or involved in the preparation of this RFP proposal. This prohibition would also apply to an entity who hires, within a one-year period prior to the publication of this RFP, a person that assisted with and/or participated in the preparation of this RFP.

-- End of Request for Proposal --