



OFFICE OF CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF CLEVELAND

BLAINE A. GRIFFIN
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

PATRICIA J. BRITT
CITY CLERK, CLERK OF COUNCIL

February 23, 2023

- REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS-

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR AUDIT, REVIEW AND
ASSESSMENT OF CLEVELAND CITY COUNCIL'S COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS**

RESPONSE DUE DATE/TIME:

Friday, March 17, 2023 /11:59 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

CLEVELAND CITY COUNCIL (“Council”), through the City Clerk, Clerk of Council (“Clerk”), requests responses from qualified parties to provide assistance with an audit of Council’s communication programs. The Council is the legislative branch of the municipal government of the City of Cleveland. On a daily basis, the Council and Clerk conduct a wide array of research, policy, legislative, document management, archive and publishing activities. Council Members are each elected from a ward, or district, of about 23,000 residents. The Office of Council is comprised of about 60 people, which includes 17 Councilmembers, their Executive Assistants, central Council staff and Consultants. More information about Council can be found at www.clevelandcitycouncil.org.

Council communication staff currently communicates with residents through the city website, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, monthly e-newsletters, committee and Council meetings streamed on the council’s YouTube page, council member newsletters, postcards, and flyers. Council members communicate with residents through the newsletters, postcards, e-newsletters, emails individually as well.

Potential respondents should have expertise in conducting comprehensive communications audits and developing strategies for long-term management of effective communication. Respondents should prepare a proposal including the format for accomplishing the work, the time frame for accomplishing the work, the fee required to perform the work, and references listing previous comparable assignments.

The Council reserves the right to award a consultant contract to the firm whose proposal and any resulting negotiations are deemed to be in the best interest of the Council.

Scope of Work:

The selected consultant will provide an audit, of the Council’s communication programs and council members’ communication efforts and practices including but not limited to:

- Use of electronic communications including emails, website and social media.
- Use of printed materials and other means of communicating with residents and businesses.

- Evaluation of current communication methods with current communication perceptions, expectations and needs of the community.
- Evaluation of what is working well and what needs attention with current communication processes both externally and internally.
- A comparison of best communications practices and resources used in comparable organizations with Council practices and resources.
- The audit should provide recommendations on desirable practices for implementation, cost-effective actions to promote improved overall communications, as well as the creation of an overall communications plan based on the results of the audit.

Strategy:

The selected consultant will provide a strategy for the long-term management of effective communication including:

- Recommended changes that may be required to both processes and policies.
- Recommended best practices in reaching target audiences, and identification of benchmarks for measuring success.

Target Audience: Primary Council audiences are:

- Residents: live, play, dine, send their kids to school and work in Cleveland; City residents are very diverse. Demographics of the residents can be made available; about 25% of the residents don't have broad band at home.
- Local Businesses local businesses range from mom and pop shops to real estate and banking some participate in local government and community issues.
- Media Cover Council politics, announcements, growth, and issues; write about events, dining, shopping and other activities in the City.

DELIVERABLES

The selected consultant will provide:

- A written report that to include audit results and recommendations.
- A presentation to highlight audit results and recommendations.
- A Communications Plan to include a strategy for the long-term management of effective communication based on audit results and recommendations.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Each submission shall include the following:

- Submitter background, including: name, address, telephone number, e-mail, and contact person; type of organization (e.g., public or private company, non-profit); name and address of parent company, if applicable; name, address and phone number of each principal; experience doing requested services; experience in/with the public sector; description of experience in the municipal government sector; specify other related services/activities; number of prior/current similar projects; personnel: total full-time equivalent (FTE) staff; estimate number of staff and/or subcontractors that might be dedicated to this project.
1. Comprehensive and concise description of the submitter's qualifications.

2. List of similar projects by the submitter involving the kind of services outlined in this RFP
3. At least two (2) references of clients (preferably municipalities) served by the submitter involving the kind of services outlined in this RFP.
4. Cost estimates and/or hourly rates involving the kind of services outlined in this RFP. These estimates/rates will not be binding should the submitter be asked to submit a detailed scope of work.

Why is this in the RFP?

1. Detailed description of communications audit and strategy program elements, including a discussion of the firm's proposed approach to performing the audit and the firm's proposed scope of work.
2. Introductory information about the company or team making the submission and the proposed project.
3. Key personnel involved in the audit and a statement of qualifications. Include examples of past experience with similar projects.
4. Timeline for the project activities.
5. List of current and former clients who have undergone a similar project.
6. Cost breakdown/ proposed budget.
7. Explanation of firm's billing procedures including rates, overtime rates, markups, etc.
8. Details of any potential or existing conflicts of interest.

Selection Criteria:

- Staff expertise and overall experience of personnel assigned to the project.
- Background and experience with similar projects.
- Demonstrated understanding of the proposed scope and approach to the project.
- Cost
- Demonstration of diversity equity and inclusion practices.

Firms must ensure that employees and applicants for employment are not discriminated against because of their gender, race, color, genetic information, religion, national origin, political affiliation, age, handicapped status, sexual orientation, sexual preference, or gender identity and expression.

Disclaimer: Council reserves the right to retain all information submitted. All submissions are public records to the extent required by the Ohio Public Records Act. All proprietary information must be clearly marked in the proposals. Proprietary information will be protected to the extent possible under the Ohio Public Records Act.

EVALUATION

The Clerk will evaluate all proposals submitted based on the information provided by each submitter and the information in this RFP. The Clerk may ask one or more of the submitters to submit a detailed scope of work, including a fee proposal. The Clerk reserves the right to award a professional services contract to the submitter deemed by her to be best able to perform the services needed by Council, or not to award a contract if no submitter adequately fits the needs of Council. The Clerk will negotiate a

professional services contract with the selected consultant, with a “not to exceed” contract amount for the provision of services as outlined in this RFP and the selected consultant’s proposed statement of work.

All proprietary information must be clearly marked in the proposals. Proprietary information will be protected to the extent possible under the Ohio Public Records Act.

Any costs incurred to develop a submission in response to this RFP are solely the responsibility of the submitter. The Clerk assumes no responsibility and will provide no reimbursement for such costs.

Any submission is a public document and is subject to Ohio public records laws.

Submissions must be submitted no later than 11:59p.m. (EST) on March 17, 2023, via:

Electronic Mail to VStiggers@clevelandcitycouncil.org; email subject must include the title of this document. Also, the email must include attachments in either Word (.doc/.docx), Excel (.xls/.xlsx), or Adobe (.pdf) file formats; or

U.S. Mail or Delivery to Va’Kedia Stiggers, Cleveland City Council, City Hall, Room 216, 601 Lakeside Avenue, East, Cleveland, OH 44114; must include a CD/DVD with the electronic version of the proposal in either Word (.doc/.docx), Excel (.xls/.xlsx), or Adobe (.pdf) file formats; may also include printed version of proposal.

TERMS

Terms of service will be one year with two one-year options to renew at the Clerk’s discretion.

INQUIRIES

Inquiries regarding this RFP should be submitted to Va’Kedia Stiggers at VStiggers@clevelandcitycouncil.org .