REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Strategic Communication Plan

**Issue Date**
March 29, 2018

**Proposal Due Date**
April 11, 2018 by 4:30 p.m.
*Any proposal received after that time will not be accepted.*

**Anticipated Contract Period**
May 1, 2018 through August 31, 2018

**Issued by**
Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC)

AAWDC is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provider of employment and training programs.

**RFP Contact**
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bleonard@aawdc.org
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## RFP Calendar of Events

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<td><strong>RFP Release</strong></td>
<td>Thursday, March 29, 2018</td>
<td>Available for download at <a href="http://www.aawdc.org/content/proposals-rfps">http://www.aawdc.org/content/proposals-rfps</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RFP Questions</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday, April 10, 2018</td>
<td>Send email to <a href="mailto:bleonard@aawdc.org">bleonard@aawdc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Questions &amp; Answers Will Be Posted on Website</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td><a href="http://www.aawdc.org/content/proposals-rfps">http://www.aawdc.org/content/proposals-rfps</a></td>
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<td><strong>Proposal Deadline</strong></td>
<td>Wednesday, April 11, 2018</td>
<td>By 4:30 PM (EST)</td>
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<td><strong>Evaluation Review</strong></td>
<td>Monday, April 16, 2018</td>
<td>Review &amp; selection of Respondent for recommendation to AAWDC.</td>
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<td><strong>Award Announcement</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday, April 17, 2018</td>
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<td><strong>Anticipated Contract Start Date</strong></td>
<td>Tuesday, May 1, 2018</td>
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I. RFP OVERVIEW

Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC) seeks to acquire the services of a qualified communications firm to develop core messaging for the Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board and AAWDC that creates two distinct core messages and clearly communicates the differences between the two entities and their mutual relationship. From there, the firm will develop a strategic communications plan to deliver these core messages to each’s target audiences.

II. BACKGROUND

Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board

The Anne Arundel County Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), which was established as part of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), sets priorities for, and exercises oversight over, workforce development activities funded under WIOA. The LWDB drives and informs the development of the workforce system in Anne Arundel County and its members are appointed by the County Executive.

Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation (AAWDC)

AAWDC’s vision is that every business has the skilled workforce needed to succeed and all Anne Arundel County citizens have met their full career potential.

AAWDC’s mission is to enhance the economic vitality of Anne Arundel County by leading the development & delivery of workforce solutions for area businesses. AAWDC works to ensure that Anne Arundel citizens are well-prepared for the workforce, ready to work & equipped with skills in demand by businesses.

AAWDC is designated by the State of Maryland and the County Executive for Anne Arundel County as the administrative entity for the LWDB.

AAWDC is a 501(c)(3) Corporation and is the bridge between understanding what businesses need and preparing citizens to meet those needs through career development strategies. AAWDC builds success for:

- **Industry** by collaborating with business leaders and partners in high-growth industries to provide innovative workforce solutions so they remain competitive in a global economy.

- **Businesses** by providing strategies for presenting qualified talent and providing customized workforce solutions, saving time and money.

- **Individuals** by connecting them to up-to-date skills and certifications required by businesses while helping to advance their own careers.
• **Community** by convening partners across the region to develop high impact initiatives that help our region grow and thrive.

**III. SCOPE OF WORK**

**Description of Requested Services**

AAWDC and the LWDB seek to retain a communications firms to assist with brand development for both entities through core messaging, guidance on future message development, and a strategic communications plan for both.

Audiences for messaging include businesses, industry leaders, elected officials, partner organizations, current and potential funders, job seekers, and other residents of Anne Arundel County.

The goals of this project are:

- Reduce the confusions between the role and responsibilities of the LWDB and AAWDC.
- Increase awareness of the work of both entities amongst each entities’ targeted audience.
- Develop a strategic communications plan for each entity that includes tactics and platforms that support the core messages for each entity (ex. A white paper written by the LWDB that focuses on the workforce outlooks for Anne Arundel County.).

**IV. DELIVERABLES**

**A. Core Messaging and Message Guidance**

A distinct set of core messages for both AAWDC and LWDB that communicate the role of each entity. Guidance for further message development including what types of messages should be coming from each entity and how to determine which entity should deliver a message in the future.

**B. Project Plan and Schedule**

A comprehensive Strategic Communications Plan with recommendations including:

1. Development of an action plan that provides a diverse range of strategies and tactics that AAWDC and LWDB should implement to increase market penetration and impact of its messaging.
2. Innovative communications methods to reach our diverse audiences as well as a mechanism for evaluating the success of communication activities.

3. Prioritization of strategies and tactics.

C. Project Status Reports

Periodic project status reports that will, at a minimum, provide a “dashboard” view of the project status, including:

- Project schedule
- Project budget

Status reports should include any other information and details related to project progress.

V. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Respondents are ineligible if they:

1) are currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State or Local department/agency;

2) have existing grants with any State or Local agency that are suspended or otherwise not in good standing; or

3) are not in good standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments & Taxation per https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch.

B. Project Duration

The contractor will be expected to complete all project activities and produce all deliverables during a period commencing on or about May 1, 2018 through August 31, 2018.

C. Project Cost

Respondents are advised to submit proposals reflecting their best and most competitive cost.

The initial contract may be modified in writing by mutual agreement of the two parties to include additional activities reasonably related to the project, with additional funding to support the completion of those activities pending
availability of funds and performance of the contractor. Payment will be contingent on the provision of services and AAWDC’s acceptance of deliverables.

D. Evaluation and Selection

1. Evaluation

The evaluation of proposals will be accomplished by the organization’s Executive Team who will determine the proposal most advantageous to AAWDC.

2. Administrative Screening

All proposals will be reviewed to determine compliance with requirements as specified in the RFP. Proposals found not to be in compliance will be rejected from further consideration.

3. Evaluation and Review

The purpose of the RFP process is to secure the Respondent most capable of providing the services specified in this document. Selection will be made solely on the basis of the most responsive proposal submitted by a qualified Respondent that satisfies all services and/or products described in this RFP.

The criteria for the evaluation process will be based on the following:

- **Corporate Qualifications and Management Support**

  This refers to the capability of the organization to perform the work requested in the RFP. This includes whether the organization has sufficient resources to work within the time constraints while maintaining desired performance levels and the level of competence of their professional personnel who will be assigned to the job by the proposer. Qualifications of professional personnel will be judged on the basis of experience and education with particular reference to prior experience on projects of a similar nature.

- **Experience**

  This refers to the Respondent’s previous successful experience with similar nonprofit strategic communications projects especially any work done with local workforce development boards or service providers.

- **Compliance with the Technical Requirements of the RFP/Approach and Methodology**

  A proposal consisting of repetition of the RFP only will not be a satisfactory indicator of the proposer’s grasp of the complexity of the project. Each proposal will be evaluated on:
(1) the proposer’s demonstrated understanding of the depth, complexity and scope of the challenges of providing workforce development services in Anne Arundel County; and

(2) the proposer’s approach and solutions to solving those challenges with an emphasis on the specific techniques proposed for delivering our messages to our target audiences, the sequencing of tasks, and the methods used for quality control.

The proposal should reflect compliance with all activities and procedures requested in the RFP.

- **Cost**

The total proposed cost will be a factor in selecting the successful proposer.

### 4. Announcement of Contractor

The award of a contract is subject to the approval of AAWDC’s Executive Team. AAWDC will notify the successful proposer and proceed to negotiate terms for final contract. The contract award will not be final until AAWDC and the Respondent have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement.

Unsuccessful Respondents will be notified by email accordingly.

### VI. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

The proposal should be organized into the following sections and sequence:

**Section A** – Describe the consultant’s approach to the project, including an overview of the proposed plan for completing activities identified in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

**Section B** – Provide a detailed work plan for completing project activities and producing project deliverables with specific action steps and a timetable for completion.

**Section C** – Discuss the proposed organization’s structure for the project, the number and qualifications of personnel that the Respondent proposes to make available to complete the work, the manner in which they will be utilized, and how they will operate within the proposed organization structure; specify the amount of time each of the key personnel will commit to the project; provide resumes of key project staff, detailing their technical skills, experience, education, etc.; and identify all pertinent experience of personnel. Please provide the primary point of contact responsible for responding to client questions, concerns and directives.
Section D – Provide information on the organization’s background, related experience, and financial condition; provide a brief history of the company and a listing of representative customers, including three references; describe the general range of products and services offered; and, while not required, identify any experience or knowledge that might relate to one-stop centers/service provider programs.

Section E – Provide a detailed budget that supports the total project cost. The budget should contain cost information and a proposed payment schedule by deliverable. The contract to be awarded will be for a fixed price but payments can be based on the completion of individual activities with AAWDC’s acceptance of project deliverables.

VII. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

All final proposals must be received by Wednesday, April 11, 2018 no later than 4:30 p.m. EST. Proposals received after that time will not be accepted.

☐ Cover Sheet – Prepare a cover sheet (Attachment A), that identifies the organization, provides contact information, date of submission, and project name.

☐ Table of Contents

☐ Proposal Narrative (includes sections A-E)

Please send electronic copies of proposals to:

jroberts@aawdc.org
PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

(Attachment A)

Name of organization:

Contact Name:

Contact Title:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Legal Status:

__Private for Profit Corp. (Date Incorporated/State )___________

__Private Not-for-Profit Corp. (Date Incorporated/State_______)

__Sole Proprietorship

__Partnership

__Other(Specify:__________________________________________________)

Title of Project:

Date of Submission:

Total Project Cost/Budget:

The Respondent certifies that the information provided in this Request for Proposal includes all attachments, is true, accurate and current, and the representative signing below is authorized to do so on behalf of the above named organization.

Signature of Authorized Representative* (required)

X ___________________________ Date:________________

*Person who legally signs contract for an organization