



FAIRFAX COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Branding, Market Research and Marketing Communications Services RFP 2020-02

Special Provisions

1. OBJECTIVE OF THIS RFP

- 1.1. The objective of this RFP is to enter into a contract with a firm or firms that will offer a unique and novel combination of **branding, market research, marketing communications services and metrics** to promote Fairfax County as an innovative business and technology center for companies and employees. This campaign will be the basis of an initiative to attract and retain talent that companies need to start, grow and succeed.

Cutting-edge approaches for marketing to millennial and Generation Z workers of all backgrounds, especially those interested in high-demand technology fields, will be required. These approaches must apply creative, out-of-the-box, non-traditional strategies and tactics that will get the attention of the target audiences and position Fairfax County as an innovative technology center in the center of the exciting Washington, D.C., region.

Traditional economic development marketing has targeted C-level executives who make site location decisions. We will continue to do that, but attracting and retaining talent is a critical issue now, especially for technology hubs such as Fairfax County, and so talent-focused approaches must take precedence.

This will be done to support the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA) mission to attract and retain businesses, attract and retain employees, create job opportunities for county residents, and build the commercial tax base that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors uses to fund high-quality public services.

- 1.2. The final decision on the contract will be made by the FCEDA Commission. **We anticipate that the contract will begin January 1, 2020.** The term of the contract is for two years, with the option for two one-year renewals thereafter, by mutual agreement of both parties.

2. SCOPE OF CONTRACT

21. The purpose of this RFP is to obtain the services of a bidder or bidders to perform the following services:
- a. Conduct **market research** on millennial and Gen Z workers, especially ages 25 to 35, in Fairfax County and nationally to understand what factors are important in their decisions on where to work and live. We are primarily looking for qualitative and quantitative primary research; focus groups and surveys, for example. The research must be tailored to include millennial and Gen Z workers of diverse backgrounds and those from historically underemployed and disadvantaged communities.
 - b. Use the research findings to develop and execute a **branding strategy** and a **marketing communications program** that promotes Fairfax County as a dynamic location that is the business center of Northern Virginia and the Washington, D.C., area.

The branding strategy must result in a visually recognizable, strong, genuine, memorable and consistent brand for Fairfax County that positions it as a place where great companies do great things and is a great place to thrive in a career.

The marketing communications component of this talent attraction and retention initiative must include an innovative and comprehensive mix of strategies and tactics that raise awareness of Fairfax County as a community filled with employers that are doing interesting work that is changing their industries – and doing it in the Washington, D.C., region that is one of the most exciting places in the world to live and work.

Target audiences of this initiative will be millennials and members of Generation Z, especially those interested in high-demand technical and professional services occupations. Targets of the attraction and retention program will include workers of all backgrounds from markets outside the Washington area, those who grew up in Northern Virginia and the Washington area and who are looking for a job after graduating from college, new-collar workers seeking employment in technology fields, and workers in historically underemployed and disadvantaged communities.

Another target will be C-level executives who make location decisions for their businesses.

Strategies and tactics, developed in conjunction with designated FCEDA representatives and others as approved by the FCEDA, must be unique and grab the attention of the target audiences. **This campaign will be unprecedented in the United States.**

Cutting-edge approaches for marketing to millennial and Generation Z workers of all backgrounds, especially those interested in high-demand technology fields, will be required. These approaches must apply creative, out-of-the-box, non-traditional strategies, tactics and technologies that will get the attention of the target audience and position Fairfax County as an innovative technology center in the center of the exciting Washington, D.C., region.

The campaign should be designed to leverage and be coordinated with current branding campaigns for Fairfax County, companies in Fairfax County, and/or institutions of higher learning in the county.

This program must be designed to be used in Fairfax County and the Washington, D.C., area, in the United States and in the FCEDA's key markets around the world.

- c. Develop and execute a national media relations program that promotes Fairfax County as a great business location and a great place to work. This program should also promote the FCEDA president and CEO to a regional and national audience as an authoritative resource on the importance of talent attraction and retention strategies for communities that want to build their economies.
- d. Recommend innovative, defined and measurable **metrics** for the marketing communications and media relations programs to show their effectiveness. Analyze regularly the effectiveness of the program, and make recommendations to the FCEDA regarding subsequent strategies and tactics.

3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR TECHNICAL (CREATIVE) PROPOSALS

- 3.1. The bidder must submit **five copies** of the technical (creative) proposal **in separate binders** and include the following information. Please follow this format:
 - a. **Experience of the bidder and primary staff members on the account**
 - 1. How long has the bidder been involved in the proposed services?
 - 2. How many employees does the bidder have?
 - 3. Describe capabilities in all relevant services: market research, branding, market communications, media outreach. List clients for the last five years, and distinguish between past and current clients.
 - 4. Does the bidder have experience in these services pertaining to economic development or community promotion?

5. Does the bidder envision using subcontractors on the FCEDA account, and how?
6. What is the bidder's experience with marketing communications services in national and international markets?
7. Describe any special strength, accomplishments or awards of note that the bidder has received in the last five years.
8. Submit resumes of the primary staff members who would be assigned to this account. How long has each worked for the agency and how would each be involved in the FCEDA account?
9. On what accounts have they worked in the last five years?
10. Describe any experience the primary staff has in marketing communications services pertaining to economic development or community promotion.

b. Strategies for services

1. Assume two budget scenarios for all the services described in section 2 of this document. One scenario has an annual budget of \$1.0 million. The second scenario has an annual budget of \$1.5 million.
2. Submit detailed recommendations for a possible program at each budget level. **Bidders need not produce all new creative material, but must be prepared to show us how they can develop an interesting, innovative, unique campaign to reach our target audiences.**
3. Highlight outcomes the bidder expects from such an effort. Bidders should also be ready to explain how these strategies and tactics would separate Fairfax County from similar and competitive business locations in the U.S. and around the world.

c. Previous work and references

1. Provide any material from three current accounts or campaigns, or those from the recent past, that would be germane to the FCEDA proposal and reflect the agency's creative abilities. **In showing us examples of previous work, bidders must be prepared to show us how they can develop an interesting, innovative, unique campaign to reach our target audiences based on the previous work.**
2. Provide any other material produced by the primary staff that reflects his/her creative abilities and would be germane to the FCEDA proposal.

3. Provide three references from current clients or clients from the recent past. References must include this information: company name, contact person, title, phone, email address and work address.
32. Proposals can come from one firm or a partnership of firms working together on a proposal. If it is a partnership of firms, one of the firms should be considered the lead for the proposal.
33. **Any particular section of your proposal that is considered to be proprietary must be so marked. For any materials marked proprietary, bidders must first identify the material to be protected and state the reason why the protection is necessary. Proposals will not be considered proprietary in their entirety.**

4. INSTRUCTIONS FOR BUSINESS PROPOSALS

41. The bidder must submit **five copies** of a business proposal **in separate binders**.

Assume the annual budget scenarios of \$1.0 million and \$1.5 million to perform the services described in section 2 of this document. Present a detailed breakout of the bidder’s costs based on each component of the proposed program. Boxes should only be filled if the bidder proposes that element in the program, but the totals must come out to \$1.0 million and \$1.5 million.

Please follow the below format:

Program Element	\$1,000,000	\$1,500,000
Monthly retainer or service fee. Please detail the services covered.		
Market research component. Please detail the services covered.		
Development and execution of a branding. Please detail the services covered.		
Development and execution of marketing communications strategy and tactics. Please detail what is covered.		
Expected costs in the production of marketing communications materials. Please detail what is covered.		
Commissions or other markups. Please detail the services covered.		

Development execution of a media outreach/relations strategy. Please detail the services covered.		
Other administrative costs (please detail).		
Other (please detail).		
Total		

- a. Include a copy of most recent balance sheet and income statement;
- b. List total billings for each of the last three calendar years;
- c. Include a copy of the firm's Business, Professional and Occupational License form from Fairfax County or other Virginia locality, if applicable.

42. Any particular section of your proposal that you consider to be proprietary must be so marked. Proposals will not be considered proprietary in their entirety.

5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

51. Five copies of the technical proposal and five copies of the business proposal are due at the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, 8300 Boone Boulevard, Suite 450, Tysons, Virginia 22182, NO LATER THAN 2:00 P.M., Eastern time, October 4, 2019. Proposals submitted by e-mail or fax will not be accepted.

6. QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RFP

61. Questions about this Request for Proposal can be submitted until 2:00 p.m. Eastern time, September 11, 2019, *via email only*, to fmorrobel@fceda.org. Questions received and responses will be posted on the FCEDA website by September 13, 2019.

7. BASIS FOR AWARD

7.1. A Selection Advisory Committee comprised of FCEDA staff members and a member of the FCEDA Commission has been established in order to review and evaluate all proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposal. In addition to satisfying criteria explained in sections 3 and 4 (technical and business proposals) of this Special Provisions document, bidders must satisfy the criteria set forth in section 23 of the General Conditions and Instructions to Bidders.

The committee first will evaluate and score the technical proposals submitted by the bidders, then the business proposals. Price shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor.

- 72. Based on the results of the initial evaluations and rankings, the highest-rated bidder(s) will be invited to make oral presentations to the Selection Advisory Committee during the week of November 18-22, 2019, at FCEDA headquarters in Tysons.**
73. The Committee will score the interviews. **Bidders with the highest compiled scores will be invited to make a presentation before the FCEDA Commission on the evening of December 9, 2019.** The Commission has the final authority to choose a bidder or bidders.
74. If a contract satisfactory and advantageous to the FCEDA can be negotiated at a price considered fair and reasonable, award shall be made to that bidder. At the time the proposed contract is negotiated, the bidder and the Selection Advisory Committee or its designee may negotiate any changes desired in the Request for Proposal if deemed in the best interest of the FCEDA.
75. The FCEDA reserves the right to award a contract by individual items, in the aggregate, or in combination thereof, or to reject any or all bids and to waive any informality in bids received whenever such rejection or waiver is in the best interest of the FCEDA.
76. The Procurement Manager, or designee, may arrange for discussions with firms submitting proposals, if required, for the purpose of obtaining additional information or clarifications.
77. Bidders are advised that, in the event of receipt of an adequate number of proposals, which, in the opinion of the Procurement Manager, or designee, require no clarifications and/or supplementary information, such proposals may be evaluated without further discussion. Hence, proposals should be submitted initially on the most complete and favorable terms from a technical standpoint which bidders are capable of submitting to the FCEDA. Should proposals submitted require additional clarification and/or supplementary information, bidders should be prepared to submit such additional clarification and/or supplementary information, in a timely manner, when so requested.
78. Proposals that, after discussion and submission of additional clarification and/or supplementary information are determined to meet the specifications of this Request for Proposal, will be classified as “acceptable.” Proposals found not to be acceptable will be classified as “unacceptable” and no further discussion concerning the same will be conducted.
79. Should the FCEDA Commission determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one bidder is fully qualified, or that one bidder is clearly more

qualified than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that bidder.

- 7.10. An award may be made to as many bidders as deemed necessary to fulfill the anticipated requirements of the FCEDA.
- 7.11. **We anticipate that the contract will begin January 1, 2020.**
- 7.12. Multi-year contracts may be continued each fiscal year only after the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors has granted program approvals and funding. In the event that the Board of Supervisors does not grant necessary funding appropriation/program approval, then the affected multi-year contract becomes null and void, effective July 1 of the fiscal year for which such approvals have been denied.

8. PRE-BID WEBINAR

- 8.1. **The FCEDA will host a pre-bid webinar on September 6, 2019, from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Eastern time.** The webinar will provide interested parties the opportunity to listen to an explanation of the RFP, ask questions and get clarification of any requirement of the RFP. Participate in the webinar by visiting <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3816979206210639627> using any computer, tablet or smartphone.

9. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

- 9.1. Proprietary information submitted by a bidder or consultant in connection with a procurement transaction shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. **However, the bidder or consultant must invoke the protection of this statute prior to or upon submission of the data or other material, must identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary.** Disposition of material after award(s) is/are made should be stated by bidder.

10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 10.1. A bidder may not currently be engaged in economic development or community promotion for any jurisdiction deemed to be in competition with the FCEDA's mission, programs or goals. Determination of a conflict shall rest solely with the FCEDA President/CEO.