

October 11th, 2023

Dear Consultants:

The City of Cleveland (“City”), through its Chief Finance Officer (“Chief”) and supported by the Executive Director of Ohio Means Jobs Cleveland-Cuyahoga (“The Director”), is currently soliciting proposals from qualified firms (“Consultant” or “Consultants”) to provide marketing strategy and materials. The Consultant should have previous marketing experience with a multi-organization initiative, as well as knowledge of minority workforce development in the built environment.

A non-mandatory pre-qualification meeting will be held virtually on Thursday, November 9th at 2:00p EST. Consultants wishing to be considered in the selection process must submit an electronic copy of their proposal **no later than 5 p.m. EST, Monday November 27th**. No proposals will be accepted after that date and time unless the City extends the deadline by a written addendum.

Electronic copies may be submitted to Project Coordinator Anne Tillie in the Department of Finance at atillie@clevelandohio.gov with the subject line “Proposal for Built Environment Marketing Strategy.”

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions of them, to waive irregularities, informalities, and technicalities, to re-issue or to proceed to obtain the service(s) desired otherwise, at any time or in any manner considered in the City’s best interests. The Chief may, at his discretion, modify or amend any provision of this notice or the RFP.

Should you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please contact Anne Tillie at 216.664.2391.

Sincerely,

Ahmed Abonamah
Chief Finance Officer
Department of Finance
City of Cleveland

CC: Michelle Rose, Executive Director of Ohio Means Jobs Cleveland-Cuyahoga (OMJCC)

Overview

The City is requesting proposals from qualified firms to develop and implement a marketing strategy to support the Built Environment (BE) Workforce Development Initiative, which is a city-funded project designed to enroll up to 3,000 residents into training programs and place 800 them into jobs, as well assist as many as 200 minority businesses.

The Consultant(s) should be able to provide marketing, engagement, and communications expertise, including the production of branded collateral. The Consultant should also have deep experience and credibility with the intended audience of the BE Initiative: Cleveland residents of color (Black and/ or Latinx) and women. The Consultant will understand there is an expectation of co-creation with the Built Environment Execution Partners. The right-fit consultant will deeply understand and therefore address how their response is designed to account for the target audience, the virtue and appeal of these career pathways, the supports available through this initiative, and successful workforce engagement strategies.

By the end of the contract, the Consultant will have articulated a suite of methods of engagement and accompanying collateral, proposed a brand for uniform branding to be used for the remainder of the project, and seen those elements through to completion. A successful marketing strategy will be one that is exciting, encouraging, and effective, meaning it helps the initiative meet its enrollment, placement, and business assistance goals state above.

The City recognizes there are a variety of perspectives, models, and approaches to marketing and engagement. Therefore, the successful Consultant should be able to discern which model(s) is best suited for the BE Initiative and explain why those model(s) are preferred.

The City also recognizes the scope and specificity of this work may require a cross-disciplinary team consisting of multiple Consultants. Therefore, if the Consultant believes their skillset cannot cover all components of the marketing strategy, the City welcomes partnerships and encourages Consultants to work with other Consultants who have complementary skillsets in their response.

Project Details

Scope of Services

PART 1: STRATEGY BUILDING

The selected Consultant is expected to conduct a landscape analysis of the current BE environment and coordinate with all 14 partners to create a strategy for marketing, engagement, and communication.

1. Components and Deliverables

- a. Meet with and interview BE partners including leadership and marketing committee members
- b. Design a plan(s) to reach intended audience

2. Review and Approvals

- a. Plan to be reviewed by all BE partners and approved by the Director.

PART 2: STRATEGY EXECUTION

The selected Consultant is expected to deploy the tools and resources necessary to execute the marketing strategy.

1. Components and Deliverables

- a. Intermittent evaluation of the effectiveness of the marketing strategy and adjust as necessary
 - b. Procure and purchase the necessary collateral and methods to execute said strategy
- 2. Review and Approvals**
- a. The Consultant will regularly check in with the BE partners and Director to ensure the strategy is meeting expectations.

PART 3: COLLATERAL

The selected Consultant is expected to create or procure collateral that can be shared by BE partners and other relevant stakeholders.

- 1. Components and Deliverables**
 - a. Based on the outcomes of interviews and plan creation, which will have been previously approved and recommended, deploy a multi-method, multi-platform collateral portfolio for widespread use.
 - b. Other materials or tools as identified in the strategy building portion of the contract
- 2. Review and Approvals**
 - a. Content to be reviewed by all BE partners and approved by the Director.

Timeline

The BE Initiative is funded for most partners through the end of 2026. The City expects most of this work to be done within the first year of the Consultant's contract; however, additional follow up work may be necessary after the first year. The City will communicate to the Consultant with sufficient notice if this is the case.

The Consultant must be prepared to commence work immediately after the execution of a Contract for Professional Services.

Budget

The BE Initiative has a very firm budget due to its limited/ finite funding source. The budget available for this work is \$240,000, which must include the consultant's time and strategy product and the execution of the proposed strategy.

Proposal Process and Guidance

Process

Tentative Timeline

The City anticipates it will - but neither promises nor is obligated to - process proposals received according to the following schedule:

Advertise Request for Proposals	Friday, October 27 th , 2023
Pre-Qualification Meeting	Thursday, November 9 th , 2023
Deadline for Submitting Questions	Wednesday, November 15 th , 2023
Deadline for Submitting Proposals	Monday, November 27 th , 2023
Selection of Finalists	Monday, December 4 th , 2023
Interviews, if applicable	Week of December 11 th , 2023
Review Financial package	Week of December 11 th , 2023
Selection of Consultant	Friday, December 15 th , 2023

The City reserves the right to refuse any submission not delivered by the deadline. Proposals or unsolicited amendments to proposals arriving after the closing will not be accepted.

Pre-Qualification Meeting

A non-mandatory pre-qualification meeting will be held on Thursday November 9th at 2:00p EST via Microsoft Teams. At that time, interested parties may ask questions pertaining to this Request for Qualifications. Those planning to attend the pre-qualification conference must register by Tuesday November 7th at 5:00p, via e-mail to atillie@clevelandohio.gov. When registering, it will be necessary to provide the names of all attendees. It is also advantageous to provide e-mail addresses for all attendees, although it is not required. Proposers are encouraged to attend the conference although attendance is not mandatory. A link and call-in information will be emailed to all registrants the morning of November 8th.

Questions and Communications

All communications will be formalized. Questions, including if this RFP should contain any discrepancies or omissions, or if the intended meaning of any part of this RFP is unclear or in doubt, may be submitted in writing to atillie@clevelandohio.gov and will be accepted until 5 p.m. Wednesday November 15th. All questions and answers will be shared with prospective Consultants. Email subject line shall be: Proposal for Built Environment Marketing Strategy.

Evaluation of Proposals

The City will evaluate all responsive proposals based upon the information and materials contained in the proposals as submitted. The City will then evaluate and score all responsive proposals, based on the evaluation criteria indicated below. The highest-scored proposal(s) shall then be deemed finalists; if necessary, the City reserves the right to expand the number of finalists in the event of ties.

Finalist Interviews

The City may select a limited number of Consultants to make a final interview of their qualifications, proposed services, and capabilities. The City will notify the Consultants selected for interviews in writing. The interview will not discuss pricing. These interviews shall be at no cost to the City of Cleveland.

Submission Requirements

Each Consultant that wishes to be considered for selection to perform the Scope of Services described in this RFP shall submit to Anne Tillie at atillie@clevelandohio.gov as two separate, non-editable pdf files, one labelled "Services Proposal_Firm Name", and one titled "Fee Proposal_Firm Name."

All proposals shall contain concise written material and illustrations. Legibility, clarity, and completeness are essential.

Each Consultant, in preparing their proposal, should consider all applicable laws and available industry guidelines as applicable.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) response, at a minimum, should include:

1. SERVICES PROPOSAL

A. Executive Summary (1 page)

The Consultant should include a brief introduction to the organization(s) and an expression of interest for the Built Environment Marketing Strategy. Clearly indicate contact information, including phone and email, for the primary contact individual. If the Consultant is partnering with another Consultant(s) to execute Part 1, Part 2, or both Parts of this work, this should be clearly indicated here.

B. Organization of the Firm and Project Team

The Consultant should include a description of the Consultant firm, including information regarding its primary business, its background and history, its organizational structure, the number of employees, and commitment to diversity. This section should contain any additional information about the firm that the firm believes will assist in understanding the qualifications of the firm. It is highly desirable that there be a local component to the Consultant team to facilitate response time to matters that require on-site reviews. The Consultant should note if it is a Minority Business Enterprise, Female Business Enterprise, and/or Cleveland Area Small Business Enterprise.

If the firm is a privately-held corporation, a listing of all stockholders, their interest in the company as related to percentage of ownership, and their interest, if any, in the operations of the entity must be included.

The Consultant should also submit an organizational chart of the organization's leadership and key project personnel. Consultants may include project personnel names, roles, and unique benefits the team brings to this project.

Consultants should include resumes of project team leadership and key personnel for this work.

If the Consultant is partnering with another Consultant(s) to execute any phases of this work, they should include the aforementioned details for each firm.

C. Project Approach

The Consultant should include a description how they intend to achieve the goals of this project, with specific descriptions of: experience with similar projects, engagement philosophy, ability to meet the needs of diverse partners and audiences, and ability to distribute content. Include a specific and complete list of proposed deliverables and a detailed conceptual project schedule.

D. Relevant Project Experience (1 page per project, up to 5 completed projects)

The Consultant should include project sheets for up to five (5) recently completed relevant projects demonstrating ability to successfully lead and execute the type of work required for this project.

If the Consultant is partnering with another Consultant(s) to execute any phases of this work, there should be at least one (1) project sheet for a relevant project for each Consultant.

E. Capacity to Perform Work (1 page)

Provide a description of the Consultant's capacity to perform work requested by describing the team's current workload, including consideration for current City project workload, and the availability of the staff to meet required schedules. Identify all projects currently being worked on by the staff the Consultant intends to assign to this project and stage of development. Describe the methods utilized to track work progress, budgets, and deadlines. Describe any support personnel or technical resources the Consultant plans to use to assist in performing work as required on schedule, and within budget.

If the Consultant is partnering with another Consultant(s) to execute any phases of this work, please indicate such and how the work will be divided.

F. References (3 pages)

The Consultant should provide three (3) verifiable positive references, which may include but are not limited to ability, performance of previous contracts and service, integrity, character, reputation, judgment, experience, efficiency, delivery and professionalism. If the Consultant is partnering with another Consultant(s) to execute any phases of this work, there should be at least one (1) reference for each Consultant. Ideally, Consultants will provide letters of support, but contact information for references is sufficient if not.

G. Special Commendations (optional)

The Consultant shall provide any other pertinent data, information and other extraordinary circumstances which will clearly demonstrate their unique ability to provide the required Professional Services in a manner not detailed previously within this RFP.

H. Certificate of Insurance

Submit a Certificate of Insurance form indicating limits of professional services (errors and omissions) and general liability coverage as a separate attachment to their Proposal, and shall at all times during the term of the contract resulting from this RFP, maintain the following insurance coverage:

- a. The insurance company or companies providing the required insurance shall be authorized by the Ohio Department of Insurance to do business in Ohio and rated "A" or above by A. M. Best Company or equivalent. The Successful Consultant, as Consultant, shall provide a copy of the policy or policies and any necessary endorsements, or a substitute for them satisfactory to and approved by the Director of Law, evidencing the required insurances upon execution of the contract.
- b. Professional liability insurance with limits of not less than \$200,000.00 for each occurrence and subject to a deductible for each occurrence of not more than \$25,000.00 per occurrence and in the aggregate, and if not written on an occurrence basis, shall be maintained for not less than two (2) years after satisfactory completion and written acceptance of the services under the contract.
- c. Workers' compensation and employer's general liability insurance as provided under the laws of the State of Ohio.
- d. Statutory unemployment insurance protection for all of its employees.
- e. Such other insurance coverage(s) as the City may reasonably require.

2. FEE PROPOSAL

The Fee Proposal shall be submitted as a separate pdf document from the Services Proposal. *If the Fee Proposal is not submitted as a separate PDF, the Consultant's proposal will be disqualified.* Content for this part of the Proposal Submission shall be organized as follows:

A. Compensation

The Consultant's proposal shall indicate the proposed fee for the service as defined previously and shall include an appropriate amount for reimbursable expenses as follows:

Total Compensation: \$

Reimbursable Allowance: \$

Total Base Compensation (Components + Reimbursable) \$

Contingency (10% of Total Base Compensation) \$

Total Contract Amount (Total Base Compensation + Contingency) \$

B. Contingency

The contingency is eligible for use in performing professional services necessary to complete the project as contemplated in this RFP but are unforeseen at the time of issuance of this RFP. Any change in professional services to be paid from this contingency shall be preceded by a clarification, an itemized scope and fee breakdown provided by the Consultant, and a written determination by the Chief's designee, and approved by the Chief, that the change qualifies for payment at rates specified in this RFP and does not exceed the available Contingency amount. The Consultant's cost for overhead, profit and other expenses contemplated for assessment against the Contingency are to be included in the Lump Sum Fee and not in the Contingency.

C. Reimbursable Expenses

Reimbursable expenses shall be accounted for and reimbursed according to the City of Cleveland Professional Services Contracts Reimbursable Policy included in Exhibit C of this RFP. The Consultant shall identify all items along with estimated costs for any reimbursable expenses required to complete for each Component of the project. This shall include, but is not limited to: deliveries, postage, printing, reproduction, geotechnical services, surveys, testing, fees, Plan review fees, permits, special inspection fees and any other approved expenses usually associated with this type of project. Reimbursable expenses, including subconsultant fees, shall be billed at cost invoiced, without any mark-up. Costs for mileage, travel, parking, tolls, lodging, meals and dues/membership fees to professional societies/organizations are NOT eligible for reimbursement and will not be considered. No qualification of the financial offer will be accepted. Reimbursable Expense Allowance amounts not expended in a previous Component may only be carried over to subsequent Components after written approval.

D. Professional Services Fee Proposal

The Fee Proposal shall indicate the makeup of your proposed fee including hourly rates, direct costs, overhead, profit, and indirect expenses based upon the total estimated hours to be spent to provide the services. In a separate PDF file titled 'Professional Services Fee', which is to be attached separate from the main proposal package PDF file, the interested Consultant shall submit one (1) digital copy via email of the interested consultant's Professional Services Fee. Included in the file, in addition to the Lump Sum Fee broken down as described above, shall be a separate breakdown of the Consultant Team's Hourly Rates based upon discipline(s), classification(s) and staffing.

Although Consultants' proposed fees are not the deciding factor in the selection of the Consultant, it will be evaluated with other criteria herein and submitted with the proposal.

E. Non-Competitive Bid Contract Form (Exhibit A)

F. Equal Opportunity Documentation (Exhibit B)

Enclosed is the Mayor's Office of Equal Opportunity Cleveland Area Business Code Notice to Bidders & Schedules - Exhibit B. The Consultant must complete and sign each of the Schedules 1 through 4 as per the instructions. The Cleveland Area Business Code, Chapter 187 of the Codified Ordinances Cleveland, Ohio, 1976, is incorporated in and made part of the RFP, and any resulting contract by this reference, as fully as if attached. Refer to Exhibits. This document is also available at ClevelandOhio.gov/oeo.

Selection Criteria

Criteria

Initially, proposals will be evaluated based on their relative responsiveness to the criteria described below and will be scored based on the point values as shown:

1. Quality of Proposal: 40 points

Quality of Proposal includes Organization of the Firm, Approach to this Project, Capacity to Perform Work, including consideration for current City project workload, and Special Accommodations

2. Credentials of Key Personnel and Firm: 25 points

Credentials of Key Personnel includes Qualifications of the Project Team and Project Team as defined in the previous section, particularly the project manager who will be the lead person on this project, and their prior experience and demonstrated ability to perform the scope of work.

3. Demonstrated Ability: 25 points

Proposed timeline to complete the work and demonstrated ability to meet proposed timeline and budgets. Demonstrated prior experience doing this type of project and examples of past related work completed by the firm are included in this.

4. Compensation/Fee: 10 points

This item will be reviewed after the evaluations of qualifications have been completed.

INTERVIEWS: Based on preliminary scoring of point-based items described above the City may create a short list of Consultant(s) and conduct interviews as warranted. Further instruction will be provided to the short listed Consultant(s) when notified of the forthcoming interview.

Additional Information and Requirements

1. Mailing List and Notifications: See Exhibit D – Mailing List is NOT exclusive. Qualified firms not on the list are encouraged to submit proposals for consideration and/or participate as team members. To assure that all modifications, notices and addenda are received, all interested firms that are included and not included on the list are required to notify Anne Tillie, Project Coordinator, in writing (via e-mail to atillie@clevelandohio.gov) of their interest in the project. Said modifications, notices and addenda will be issued to those firms that have made their interest known. Firms that fail to confirm their interest risk not receiving important information regarding the project. The City will require the selected Consultant Team to abide by this RFP and any subsequent modifications, notices and addenda.
2. The City will not be responsible for any costs, expense or burden incurred by Consultants in the preparation and submission of proposals.
3. Proposals submitted are not made publicly available until the contract has been awarded by the City of Cleveland. All proposals and supporting materials as well as correspondence relating to this RFP become property of the City of Cleveland when received. Any proprietary information contained in the proposal should be so indicated. However, a general indication that the entire contents, or a major portion, of the proposal is proprietary will not be honored.
4. By submission of a proposal, the Consultant acknowledges that it is aware of and understands all requirements, provisions, and conditions in and of this RFP and that its failure to become familiar with all the requirements, provisions, conditions, and information either in this RFP or disseminated either at a pre-proposal conference or by addendum issued prior to the proposal submission deadline, and all circumstances and conditions affecting performance of the services to be rendered by the successful Consultant will not relieve it from responsibility for all parts of its Proposal and, if selected for contract, its complete performance of the contract in compliance with its terms. Consultant acknowledges that the City has no responsibility for any conclusions or interpretations made by Consultant on the basis of information made available by the City. The City does not guarantee the accuracy of any information provided and Consultant expressly waives any right to a claim against the City arising from or based upon any incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete information or information not otherwise conforming to represented or actual conditions.
5. No organization, firms, or individuals seeking award of a contract under this solicitation may initiate or continue any verbal or written communications regarding the solicitation with any City officer, elected official, employee, or other City representative without permission of the Division of Purchasing named on the solicitation, between the date of the issuance of the solicitation and the date of final contract award by the City of Cleveland. Violations will be reviewed by the Director of the Division of Purchasing. If determined that such communication has compromised the competitive process, the offer submitted by the organization, firm, or individual may be disqualified from consideration for award.

6. The City of Cleveland reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to request clarifications, to negotiate changes in the scope of services, and to waive any technicalities as deemed in its best interest.
7. One (1) electronic file of your proposal should be submitted to atillie@clevelandohio.gov . One (1) separate fee schedule shall be submitted in a file saved as "Firm Name_FEE SCHEDULE." Proposals must be signed by a company official who has authorization to commit company resources or include a separate letter of support from the official with authorization to commit company resources.
8. Under the laws of the State of Ohio, all parts of a proposal, other than trade secret or proprietary information and the fee proposal, may be considered a public record which, if properly requested, the City must make available to the requester for inspection and copying. Therefore, to protect trade secret or proprietary information, the Consultant should clearly mark each page - but only that page - of its proposal that contains that information. The City will notify the Consultant if such information in its proposal is requested, but cannot, however, guarantee the confidentiality of any proprietary or otherwise sensitive information in or with the proposal. Blanket marking of the entire proposal as "proprietary" or "trade secret" will not protect an entire proposal and is not acceptable.
9. The City is not responsible for any explanation, clarification, interpretation, representation or approval made concerning this RFP or a Proposal or given in any manner, except by written addendum. The City will mail, e-mail, or otherwise deliver one copy of each addendum issued, if any, to each individual or firm that requested and received a RFP. Any addendum is a part of and incorporated in this RFP as fully as if originally written herein.
10. Proposals and fee schedules shall be emailed to Anne Tillie at atillie@clevelandohio.gov with the subject line "Proposal for Built Environment Marketing Strategy."
11. Questions and requests for information should be directed to Anne Tillie (atillie@clevelandohio.gov 216-664-2391).

Exhibits

Exhibit A: Non-Competitive Bid Contract Form

Exhibit B: Equal Opportunity Documentation

Exhibit C: Reimbursable Expenses

Exhibit D: Mailing List and Notifications