

RFP#252-22-023

Questions received

LED Responses

- 1) Are tourism, the arts and culture considered key components of the department's economic development mission?**

No.

- 2) Are the incumbent agencies eligible for consideration of new contracts under this RFP?**

Yes.

- 3) Has this RFP been issued in accord with a regular schedule or are there other reasons why the department has chosen to issue this RFP now? If the latter, can you please elaborate?**

Yes. The RFP is being issued in accordance with a Request for Proposals (RFP) process every three (3) years.

- 4) Louisiana ranked well among southern states in the Southern Business & Development magazine ratings. Is there a particular motivation attached to potentially changing agencies of record at this point in time?**

The RFP is being issued in accordance with a Request for Proposals (RFP) process every three (3) years.

- 5) Do you expect budgets under any new agency contracts to be higher, lower or stay the same as under current contracts?**

The currently projected FY2023 marketing budget is approximately \$3,750,000. Budgets for each component will vary and are subject to legislative approval annually.

Current three (3) year contracts are as follows:

Component 1- Strategic Development and Brand Identity Marketing - \$2,936,381

Component 2- Website and Digital Communication Tools - \$2,500,000

Component 3- Media Buying - \$4,400,000

Component 4- Public Relations/External Communications - \$2,600,000

- 6) What is the anticipated length of any new contracts that may be issued as a result of winning the RFP?**

Three years, with an option to extend for two additional years with required approvals. See RFP, Section 1.4 Terms of Contract.

- 7) We see that the current contracts were extended for several months or up to a year. Can you explain why those extensions took place?**

Annual addendums must be completed to add budget dollars based on annual legislative approval. Contract term options are listed in section 1.4 of the current RFP. A term of up to 36 months was provided for in the prior RFP.

- 8) Core elements of the state's economy include energy and chemicals, tourism, agriculture, commercial fisheries, transportation and ports, etc. Is the department seeking to expand its economic development outreach in other specific fields? If so, can you please elaborate (without exposing any confidential information or strategies)?**

Louisiana Economic Development(LED) focuses its work on these key industries: advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agribusiness, energy, entertainment, process industries, software development, water management, and life sciences.

- 9) Under Section 1.14, Technical and Cost Proposals, you indicate the following: One (1) redacted proposal (if applicable) in PDF and Microsoft Word formats. Can you advise in what instance would the redacted proposal be required?**

If the Proposer's response contains confidential or proprietary information, the Proposer should also submit a redacted copy of their proposal along with their original proposal. When submitting the redacted copy, the Proposer should clearly mark the cover as such - "REDACTED COPY" - to avoid having the unredacted copy released in response to a public records request. The redacted copy should also state which sections or information has been removed.

Only information which is in the nature of legitimate trade secrets or non-published financial data shall be deemed proprietary or confidential. Any material within a proposal identified as such must be clearly marked in the proposal and will be handled in accordance with the Louisiana Public Records Act, R.S. 44: 1-44 and applicable rules and regulations. Any proposal marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety shall be rejected without further consideration or recourse.

- 10) Also, under Section 1.14 you indicate that for electronic submission, you are requesting (1) one technical proposal in PDF and Microsoft format. We have designed our response in Indesign and can convert to a PDF. Is a Microsoft Word upload also mandatory? Microsoft Word may present issues with the creative work samples and files being manipulated.**

The proposal can be submitted in PDF format.

11) Is retainer/flat fee billing a consideration? If so, what kind of detail should accompany the invoices?

No. For Components 1, 2 and 4, projects will be executed under the contract by a Task Order from LED. The project plan provide by the Contractor to LED will include timelines, roles, responsibilities and hourly rates resulting in a flat fee. Projects will be compensated based on the flat fee regardless of hourly time accrued. Detailed reports on hours worked based on project and staff member must accompany outcomes of the month.

For Component 3, projects will be compensated by a commission fee.

12) Under section 1.8.1 Mandatory Qualifications - you ask that we provide:

- a. Proposer's billings for each of the past four years**
- b. List all clients Proposer has worked with over the last two years**
- c. List of all economic development clients Proposer has worked with over the last five years**
- d. Five client references**
- e. Proposer capabilities information**

These items are not noted in the Proposal Response Format and suggested order noted in section 1.9. Can we include these items as sub-sections of section 1.9? For example, 1.9.3.1 would include items a-e above. Or should these items be included under a section titled 1.8.1 Mandatory Qualifications and be included before cover letter?

*The mandatory qualifications section lists what **must** be provided in the proposal in order to be considered. You can place these items where they best flow within your proposal in the corresponding sections. It is suggested to place this information under 1.8.1.*

13) Component 1 Strategic Development/Brand Identity: Place and coordinate tracking research to evaluate Louisiana's success in changing perceptions and raising awareness about the State as a place to do business.

Does "tracking research" refer to brand sentiment studies and analytics?

LED expects a research-based approach to the strategy of Department marketing and communications plan. LED expects the provider of this to present the best way to accomplish the necessary research.

14) Component 2 Website and Digital Communication Tools:

- a. Your pricing worksheet does not include a line item for web hosting. Should we assume that these fees will be included in the overall contracted budget?**

All hard cost fees of running website and digital communication tools will be an actual cost, reimbursable part of the contract and required payments to the Contractor.

- b. The pricing worksheet does not include a role/task description for support and maintenance related to web hosting. Should we use our discretion on what role/service covers these duties?**

Cost for maintenance of websites as part of web hosting should be included under administrative duties.

- c. The pricing worksheet does not include a role/task description for Interactive Developer, but it's listed under scope (page 21 of the RFP). Should we adjust the pricing worksheet to include this role?**

No. Costs for Interactive Developer should be listed under production services.

- 15) What are LED's top three business goals for the next 18 months that the selected agencies would help drive?**

Determining business goals will be a part of onboarding and the development of the strategic planning process.

- 16) What are the most important goals that LED's Marketing & Communications team would like to achieve in the next 1-3 years?**

Continuing and meeting our mission.

Mission: Cultivate jobs and economic opportunity for the people of Louisiana through nine integrated economic development strategies:

- *Strategically improve state economic competitiveness*
- *Engage with local partners to enhance community competitiveness*
- *Forge partnerships to enhance regional economic development assets*
- *Expand and retain in-state businesses*
- *Execute a strong business recruitment program*
- *Cultivate small business, innovation and entrepreneurship*
- *Enhance workforce development solutions*
- *Promote Louisiana's robust business advantages*
- *Attract foreign direct investments and grow international trade*

With dedicated and knowledgeable professionals committed to Louisiana's economic future, LED strives to help businesses find the resources they need to make relocation and expansion a successful, profitable endeavor.

- 17) What are the key strategies of your current strategic marketing plan? What components of the marketing plan are in motion and operating effectively? What components have not yet been implemented or optimized?**

The current marketing plan supports the vision and mission of the agency. A full review of the current marketing plan and status of projects will be a part of the onboarding process upon contract completion.

- 18) How do you anticipate your strategic plan shifting over the next three years?**

Unknown at this time.

- 19) What would your chosen contractor do in the first 90 days to achieve early success on C1 and C2 of the RFP?**
This will be determined during the onboarding process.
- 20) What aspects of the working elements specified in C1 and C2 of the RFP would you like to significantly alter after the contract is awarded?**
This will be determined during the onboarding process.
- 21) What aspects of the working elements specified in C1 and C2 of the RFP are you currently satisfied with and would like to continue with minimal adjustment after the contract is awarded?**
This will be determined during the onboarding process.
- 22) How would you prefer to see Approach & Methodology demonstrated in the RFP response? What specific elements are you wanting to see in this section?**
The approach & methodology shown should showcase the proposer's ability in this area. There is not a specified way to demonstrate this section. Please refer to RFP Section 1.9.6
- 23) Regarding the one-hour notice, in-person request for meetings with key personnel, what example scenarios can you share where that would be needed for C1 and C2 work?**
This depends on the occurrence. LED is customer service oriented for its stakeholders, including but not limited to, internal departments, companies LED works with, regional economic development organizations and the Governor's office, etc. If the stakeholders need something from the marketing team, which would require support from a contractor, we provide it as quickly as needed. Sometimes these are very quick turnarounds.
- 24) Please describe your ideal process for handling change-requests for projects that require significant scope modifications during the course of the project.**
We would work with the agency of record to establish a process that works for all parties involved. This will be determined during the onboarding process.
- 25) What if any of the contract terms are negotiable based on the quality of agency selected?**
A sample contract which contains terms applicable to any successful proposer is provided in Attachment E. Any contract exceptions which proposer requests should be provided in his proposal. See, RFP, Section 1.9.3, Executive Summary and 1.33, Contract award and Execution..
- 26) Who fulfills the contract monitor position noted in the RFP?**
Executive Director of Marketing & Communications

- 27) What is the scope of “social media management” outlined in C2?**
This will be determined during the planning process of developing a social media strategic plan to meet the needs of the agency. It varies based on the plan.
- 28) Are you willing to sign an NDA to receive complete information on the agency’s current client roster?**
An NDA will not be signed to receive information requested by the RFP. Please see the last paragraph of section 1.16 Confidential Information, Trade Secrets, and Proprietary Information in the RFP.
- 29) Work days are listed in the RFP as 7-days a week, 6am - 8pm CT. Is that a correct expectation of work hours as it relates to staffing and availability of staff?**
The RFP does not list this as work days. Seven (7) days is part of the service level requirement for website security, maintenance, and responses. Please see section 2.2.2 section 1, Service Level Agreement Criteria, and 2.2.2 section 2 support/response time.
- 30) What are the ideal qualifications, experience, and/or background for the chosen team? What qualifications, experience, or backgrounds do you prioritize/prefer?**
See RFP, Section 1.9.7 Proposed Staff Qualifications.
- 31) Regarding the desire for the State to provide written consent for a change in team personnel, what are the details for how that process works?**
We would work with the agency of record to establish a process that works for all parties involved. This will be determined during the onboarding process.
- 32) What is the intent of staff assigned to the LED account being exclusive to that account?**
The amount of projects and work requires dedicated staff to meet the timelines.
- 33) To help anticipate adequate baseline staffing needs, is there a minimum constant number of projects monthly for C1 + C2, and if so, what is the number of projects?**
This will be determined based on the strategic plan developed.
- 34) If the chosen agency assigns staff exclusively to the LED account but there is a month where LED project work slows down, would the agency be able to take on new outside work to help offset the baseline staffing costs?**
We have not experienced this in the past.

35) How does LED prioritize diversity on its Contractor teams?

The RFP includes initiatives for the Veteran-owned and Service-Connected Hudson Disabled Veteran Owned Small Entrepreneurship program and the Louisiana Initiative for Small Entrepreneurships (Hudson Initiative). See RFP, Section 3.0, Evaluation and Section 3.2.

36) How do we handle freelance talent that might be partially allocated to LED? Are CVs and references required?

Yes.

37) What research is currently being conducted to evaluate LA's success in changing perceptions and raising awareness about LA as a place to do business? When was the last survey conducted and on what cadence have they been conducted previously? Similarly, what qualitative and quantitative research is currently being conducted and on what cadence?

There is no current research being conducted. The last research conducted was in Dec. 2020.

38) What are your expectations around consumer research and testing? Do you have specific requests in mind or would the agency direct this strategy?

We encourage the agency of record to conduct any needed research to support the plans to meet the agreed upon goals. This will be collaboratively determined as a part of onboarding and planning.

39) What is a minimum and maximum thresholds of cash assets a contractor may require to sufficiently cover LED-related invoices prior to reimbursement from LED?

The contractor will invoice LED for all expenses related to the contract. LED will pay the contractor prior to the contractor paying the originating vendor.

40) Does the contractor need to require prior invoices to be paid before reimbursement?

The contractor should provide back-up invoices or credit card charges (along with supporting documentation) in billing sent to LED. LED will process payment to the contractor for the contractor to pay the originating vendor.

41) What accounting needs are necessary for the successful management of each component? What financial reporting does LED prefer/require and in what cadence?

Monthly invoices that include detailed reports on hours worked based on project and staff member, accompany outcomes of the month.

- 42) Regarding the desire for a flat fee per project regardless of staff hours worked, how does LED handle change orders for projects that require additional work, rounds or review or revisions, etc., not originally scoped? Essentially, how are differences navigated between projects as-scoped vs as-delivered?**

We would work with the agency of record to establish a process that works for all parties involved. This will be determined during the onboarding process.

- 43) What weight will rates hold in the overall selection of a partner? Are there preferred rates that LED can share for each role?**

Cost is 20% of the evaluation. See RFP, Section 3. Evaluation, regarding cost and other technical factors which will be evaluated. LED will not provide suggested rates.

- 44) In section 1.8.1 you mention the production of websites and apps. How do you envision the vendor to help maintain your apps? And which apps specifically are you referring to?**

We currently do not have any apps. This covers any possible future development considerations.

- 45) In section 1.8.1 you mention the need for social media management. Are there any platforms in particular you would like for us to focus on or is this up to the discretion of the vendor?**

We would work with the agency of record to establish a platform(s) that works for all parties involved. This will be determined during the onboarding process.

- 46) How many websites in total do you require a full redesign for? Are there any that require a partial redesign?**

We would work with the agency of record to determine what is needed during a review and audit of all web properties during the onboarding process.

- 47) Do any of the websites require solely maintenance? How do you envision the vendor helps maintain those sites?**

For maintenance on sites, we require support and billing ownership on all areas that are required for maintenance, including but not limited to, hosting, development support, security monitoring, trouble shooting, infrastructure management, etc.

- 48) What is your budget for component 2 of this RFP?**

The anticipated dollar value for a three -year contract term for component 2 is \$1,800,000. Maximum budgets for each component will be included in

each contract. Budgets for each component will vary. Budgets are subject to legislative appropriation.

- 49) In section 1.8.1 under Component 2: Website and Digital Communication Tools. You mention the need for email marketing services. Does the vendor already have a formed email list?**

Yes, LED has an email list.

- 50) In section 1.8.1 under Component 2: Website and Digital Communication Tools. You mention the need for "Digital and social media communication tools development and management." At the moment you have social platforms on Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Would you consider adding on an Instagram account?**

Yes. Louisiana Entertainment currently has an Instagram account.

- 51) In section 1.8.1 under Component 4: Public Relations/External Communications. You mention the need for special event management.**
a. Is this management of all digital communications regarding the event on your different digital platforms?

No, the component 4 vendor is not expected to manage digital communications on digital platforms for events.

- b. Or is the Vendor expected to plan and organize special events?**

No, the component 4 vendor is not expected to plan and organize special events.

- 52) Is there an incumbent agency?**

Yes

- 53) What is the current commission rate for media placement?**

10%

- 54) Can a list of other agencies submitting questions be provided?**

Not at this time. The list of agencies submitting questions can be provided after the award selection(s).

- 55) Additionally, who are the desired target audiences of this project overall?**

LED's target audiences include site consultants, CEOs, legislators, regional economic development organizations, and others depending on the specific project within the overall strategic plan.

56) Is a rate required for all the roles identified in the Cost Worksheet? Is there an option to add additional roles to the Cost Worksheet?

All items under each component are mandatory and must be included as they are listed in the cost worksheet. The proposal will be disqualified if all rates are not provided as required, or if additional items are inserted.

57) What will a successful agency x LED partnership look like? How will this be measured?

This will be determined during the onboarding process.

58) What do you consider the biggest successes and failings of past campaigns?

This has varied depending on the tactic, industry and specific goal to be met. Measuring and reviewing success and failures will be part of onboarding and the development of the strategic planning process.