



REQUEST FOR QUOTES

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERVICES

Southeast Crescent Regional Commission
1901 Assembly Street | Suite 370
Columbia, SC 29201
www.scrs.gov

Overview

The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC) seeks quotes for comprehensive public relations and communications services aligned with its strategic goals. Specifically, SCRC is seeking expertise in writing and distributing press releases across media outlets in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. Additionally, we require support in speech writing, social media management, and other public affairs-related duties. The selected company will play a crucial role in enhancing our organization's communication strategies and amplifying our message across diverse platforms and audiences within the forementioned states.

Introduction to Southeast Regional Commission

About the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission

SCRC is a federal-state entity tasked with promoting economic development and growth in distressed areas across the southeastern United States. Established in 2008 under the Farm Bill, the SCRC focuses on addressing the unique challenges faced by rural communities in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia. Through strategic investments and partnerships, the Commission aims to stimulate job creation, infrastructure development, and sustainable economic opportunities in the region.

Comprised of a Federal Co-Chair and Member-States, the SCRC collaborates with local communities, stakeholders, businesses, and organizations to identify and support projects that align with its mission. By leveraging federal resources and coordinating with state governments, the Commission plays a vital role in revitalizing underserved communities and fostering long-term prosperity throughout the Southeast Crescent region.

Additional information about SCRC is available at www.scrc.gov.

Desired Services

The desired services include the following:

1. Cultivate SCRC's reputation as a leading advocate for poverty eradication through systematic economic development, while strategically partnering with all industries currently operating within our region or seeking to establish a presence in our region, in collaboration with the Department of Commerce in each respective state.

2. Collaborating with SCRC to develop and execute a strategic communications plan, encompassing:
 - a. Monitoring relevant news and maintaining press lists.
 - b. Providing and distributing communication assets.
 - c. Establishing a marketing plan and enhancing SCRC's digital presence.
 - d. Managing social media platforms and conducting social media listening and analysis.
3. Offering speech writing support tailored to effectively convey SCRC's message to diverse audiences, ensuring alignment with objectives and resonance with the target audience.
4. As needed, draft and help place op-eds, letters to the editor, and other external messaging, pitch interview opportunities, and facilitate story placement as needed to support quick action to facilitate the advancement of the SCRC. Developing topline messaging about SCRC's programs to increase opportunities to build awareness that will result in a positive narrative.
5. Assisting SCRC in developing a public engagement plan to raise awareness of its programs, including:
 - a. Identifying key audiences and facilitating engagement with external stakeholders.
 - b. Creating signature branding activities and developing unique social media and digital content.
 - c. Incorporating outreach activities across radio, television, and print publications.
6. Ensuring uniform communication across all media platforms to maintain consistency in messaging and branding.
7. Providing monthly performance reports to track progress and assess the effectiveness of communication strategies.

Geographic Coverage

- | | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Alabama | 5. North Carolina |
| 2. Florida | 6. South Carolina |
| 3. Georgia | 7. Virginia. |
| 4. Mississippi | |

Timeline

1. Project start date: NLT Apr 30, 2024
2. Expected duration: 1-year contract with possibility of extensions depending on performance.
3. Critical milestones or deadlines: With the anticipated announcement of inaugural grant awardees in mid-May, close collaboration between the selected company and SCRC is paramount. The company must actively participate in drafting and distributing press releases to maximize visibility and impact. Additionally, ensuring the timely distribution of announcements to local media outlets in each state is crucial for effective communication and outreach.

Requirements

1. 1. The responding firm must have established media contacts and be certified to operate within Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.
2. Describe its experience working for or with public entities and specify its level of expertise.
3. Be available to accommodate the public relations needs of SCRC in a timely and efficient manner. Firm must demonstrate that primary and reasonably qualified backup and support public relations professionals are available as needed, and that the proposer has staff capabilities to perform the work with short turn-around times.
4. Provide three client references, including name, address, e-mail and telephone number.
5. Furnish electronic access to a portfolio showcasing past performance in the specified areas and your ability to deliver high-quality results.

Company Qualifications and Experience

1. Qualifications and Demonstrated Experience
 - a. Describe in detail your firm's experience in providing public relations and communications services, particularly in areas related to writing and distributing press releases, speech writing, social media management, and public affairs duties. Highlight your firm's achievements in enhancing communication strategies and amplifying messages across diverse platforms and audiences, specifically within the states of Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia.
2. Key Personnel
 - a. List the key personnel assigned to this project, detailing their qualifications, roles, and how they will contribute to its success. Emphasize experience related to strategic communications within the public sector or similar fields.

3. Strategic Approach and Innovation
 - a. Outline your strategic approach to achieving SCRC's communication goals, including how you plan to enhance our digital presence, manage social media platforms, and develop a strategic communications plan. Describe any innovative practices or technologies your firm uses to stay ahead in the field of public relations and communications.
4. Capacity to Meet SCRC's Needs
 - a. Illustrate how your firm can swiftly and effectively meet the SCRC's public relations demands, highlighting your capability to address urgent issues, strategize the allocation of resources and staff for the project, maintain a comprehensive list of media contacts in each state, and demonstrate flexibility in adjusting to evolving needs and priorities.

Evaluation Criteria

Quotes will be evaluated based on:

Proposals that meet the Crescent Request for Quotes (RFQ) requirements will undergo evaluation by a Scoring Committee utilizing the following Evaluation Criteria. The order does not indicate importance.

1. Overall organization and quality of the proposal, including coherence, conciseness, and clarity of response.
2. Quality and depth of the firm's expertise, with emphasis on prior work in the areas specified in the Scope of Services section. Consideration will also be given to individuals or firms with previous involvement with SCRC, assessing the quality of their work on those transactions.
3. Experience in collaborating with public entities and in particular regional commissions.
4. Ability to promptly address time-sensitive matters that necessitate quick action.
5. Demonstrated proficiency in conducting stakeholder outreach across the Southeast Crescent region, as described in the Scope of Services.
6. Commitment of time and resources to the project, including willingness to collaborate with SCRC Corporate Communications staff and other personnel in various capacities.
7. Anticipated cost of services and willingness to collaborate with SCRC to minimize expenses.
8. Certification as an SBA disadvantaged business, women-owned business, service-disabled veteran-owned business and/or HUBZone business, if applicable.
9. Feedback and information provided by client references.

Submission Guidelines

1. To submit quotes for consideration, please ensure that all documents are compiled into a single signed PDF file.
2. The deadline for submission is **April 4, 2024, at 5:00 PM EST**.
 - a. Late submissions **will not** be accepted.
3. Please send your quotes, along with all supporting documentation, to Christopher McKinney (cmckinney@scrc.gov) and Tasha Derrick (tderrick@scrc.gov).