



REQUEST FOR QUOTES

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS SERVICES

Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC)
1901 Assembly Street | Suite 370
Columbia, SC 29201
www.scrc.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 Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South 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 SCRC's communication strategies and amplifying the message across diverse platforms and audiences within the seven forementioned states.

About the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission

The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC) is a federal-state partnership authorized by Congress in the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (“the Farm Bill”) to promote and encourage economic development in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. SCRC invests in projects that support basic infrastructure, business development, natural resource preservation and workforce development. SCRC is committed to supporting job creation, building communities and improving the lives of the 51 million people who reside in the 428 counties of the seven-state region. Through strategic investments and partnerships, the Commission aims to stimulate job creation, infrastructure development, and sustainable economic opportunities in the region.

SCRC collaborates with local communities, stakeholders, businesses, and organizations to identify and support projects that align with the mission as outlined in the Five-year Strategic Plan. By leveraging federal resources and coordinating with state and local governments, the Commission assists in revitalizing underserved communities and fostering long-term prosperity throughout the Southeast Crescent region.

Governing documents and additional information about SCRC are available at www.scrc.gov.

Desired Services

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.

2. Develop and execute a strategic communications plan which encompasses:
 - 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 analysis.
3. Provide speech writing support tailored to effectively convey SCRC's message to diverse audiences, ensuring alignment with objectives and resonance with the target audience.
4. Draft and place op-eds, editorials, and other external messaging, pitch interview opportunities, and facilitate story placement as needed to support quick action to facilitate the advancement of SCRC. Developing topline messaging about SCRC's programs to increase opportunities to build awareness that will result in a positive narrative.
5. Assist 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 all media outlets, to include radio, television, and print publications.
6. Ensure uniform communication across all media platforms to maintain consistency in messaging and branding.
7. Provide monthly performance reports to track progress and assess the effectiveness of communication strategies.

Geographic Coverage

Portions of Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and all of Florida.

Timeline

1. Project start date: NLT Apr 30, 2024
2. Expected duration: 1-year contract with possibility of extensions depending on performance and agency need.
3. Critical milestones or deadlines: With the anticipated announcement of inaugural grant awardees, close collaboration between the selected company and SCRC is paramount. The vendor 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. The vendor must have established media contacts and be certified to operate within Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia.
2. Describe experience working with public entities and specify levels 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 vendor has staff capabilities to perform the work with short turn-around times. Describe how this requirement will be met.
4. Provide three client references, including name, address, e-mail, and telephone number.
5. Furnish electronic access to a portfolio demonstrating past performance in the specified areas and 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 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 successfully meet stated expectations. Emphasize experience related to strategic communications within the public sector or similar fields.
3. Strategic Approach and Innovation
 - a. Outline a 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 proposed to be used 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 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 SCRC's Request for Quotes (RFQ) requirements will undergo evaluation by a Scoring Committee utilizing the following Evaluation Criteria. (Not in order of 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 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 8, 2024, at 5:00 PM EST**.
 - a. Late submissions **will not** be accepted.
 - b. Questions about this RFQ will be accepted and answered until Thursday, April 4, 2024 at 5pm.
3. Please send your quotes, along with all supporting documentation, to Christopher McKinney (info@scrc.gov), Tasha Derrick (accounting@scrc.gov) and info@scrc.gov.