



Corporation
for Public
Broadcasting

Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Request for Agency Proposal

Public Relations Agency Partner to develop the: Dropout Awareness and Youth Engagement Initiative

February 2011

Proposals: The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is undertaking this search process to engage a public relations agency partner to support the Dropout Awareness and Youth Engagement Initiative (Dropout Initiative) being planned for 2011 and following years as described in greater detail below.

Background: The high school dropout rate is one of the biggest crises facing the United States today. According to a national Diplomas Count 2010 report in *Education Week*, three out of every 10 students in America's public schools fail to finish high school – an average of more than 7,200 students drop out each day and about 1.3 million students drop out every year. Most non-graduates are members of historically disadvantaged minority groups. Only 56% of Latino, 54% of African American, and 51% of Native American students graduate on time. In addition to the effect that dropping out has on individual students and their families, the dropout crisis has a detrimental economic effect on the nation as a whole. According to the Alliance for Excellent Education, high school dropouts from just one year are estimated to cost the U.S. \$329 billion in lost wages, taxes and productivity. Dropouts are more likely to be incarcerated, to rely on public programs and social services, and to go without health insurance. Approximately 2,000 high schools account for nearly half of the nation's dropouts. These schools exist in every state. In a system survey conducted by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in September 2010, more than 175 public media stations indicated they are involved in youth engagement initiatives and/or are providing coverage of the dropout crisis, and more than 200 indicated a desire to expand their work. CPB's Dropout Awareness and Youth Engagement Initiative will build on that experience through a multi-million dollar investment that leverages the assets of local and national public media to help address this issue.

The Dropout Initiative will be centered in a community engagement/service program that will be executed by 12 "Hub" communities where the dropout crisis is most acute, and will be supported by community promotion at the local level, and national media and thought leader awareness at the national level. The 12 Hub communities are being selected by an RFP available [here](#).

The three areas of focus for the Dropout Initiative are:

- Identify public media's unique role in helping communities address the Dropout crisis; and,
- Drive public media organizations to utilize their available educational and engagement resources to foster community dialogue and action to address the dropout crisis on a local level; and,
- Ensure that public media organizations participating in the initiative communicate their impact and engagement to key stakeholders in the communities they serve.

Our agency partner will assist in planning and execution of the Dropout Initiative in a number of ways. The program is in a fluid final planning stage right now, so the scope may change somewhat as decisions are made. As currently envisioned, the scope of work *may include* some or all of the following:

CREATIVE

- Assist in development of theme/slogan/tagline for the Dropout Initiative, along with graphic identity.
- Develop PSAs (print, broadcast and web) to announce and promote the Dropout Initiative.
- Develop collateral materials that may be needed for the Dropout Initiative.

PARTNERSHIPS

- Provide counsel on potential partners and partnership development both in the hub communities and nationwide.
- Develop materials to help local stations recruit local partners to assist them with the Dropout Initiative outreach activities.

AWARENESS

- Assist in developing concepts for grassroots activities that could be executed by local stations.
- Develop turn-key or template materials that stations could use to execute these activities.
- Be available to provide counsel and support for stations as they execute their local programs.

MEDIA RELATIONS

- Development of core media messages, identification of a wide range of national media targets (beyond reporters who cover television and radio), preparation of materials for national media.

- Development of turn-key media materials for use by local stations.
- Development of and execution of media outreach training for stations that do not have in-house PR staff.
- Provide media training to CPB and partner presenters.
- Support the execution a major national event to launch the Dropout Initiative.
- Media outreach at national level at launch and post-launch, to keep the Dropout Initiative top of mind with key reporters, editors, columnists (may include features, op-ed, letters to editor, etc.)
- Provide counsel and support in managing online and social media platforms.
- Local media outreach in markets where stations need assistance or support.
- Monitor national and local media and prepare monthly coverage reports.

CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT

- Provide counsel to the CPB Dropout Initiative team on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), and ways that these indicators can be benchmarked pre-campaign, monitored during the campaign, and measured and evaluated post-campaign.
- Provide counsel on establishing a system to measure program *outcomes*.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Creative capacity to develop a theme and associated communications materials for a national community engagement initiative.
2. Organizational capacity to manage a national campaign.
3. Ability to develop and utilize performance measures to determine campaign effectiveness.
4. Ability to support multiple organizational partners in execution of a national campaign.
5. Cost of proposed services.

SEARCH PROCESS TIMETABLE

Agencies are asked to provide background information and case studies as described in this document by **4:00 p.m., Friday, March 4, 2011.**

By **Tuesday, March 8**, selected agencies will be notified that they are finalists and will be asked to come to the CPB offices for briefings, including time for questions and answers with representatives the CPB Education and Public Awareness Initiative teams, on **Wednesday, March 9 or Thursday, March 10.**

Onsite presentations of a **specific creative approach** for this campaign will be scheduled for **Thursday, March 18, 2011**, in Washington, D.C., and the presenting agencies will be notified of the final outcome early in the week of **March 21**. The selected agency will be invited to an agency orientation meeting which will be held on **Thursday, March 24**, so finalists are asked to hold that day open.

Instructions:

Please complete the questionnaire below, attach the documents as requested, and return via email to **Doug McKenney, Executive Director, Public Awareness Initiative**, at dmckenney@cpb.org by **4:00 p.m. Friday, March 4**. Any questions may be directed to Mr. McKenney at 202-879-9824.

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Information to include as part of RFP

1. Agency name, contact for this RFP, address, phone and email:
2. Name, title, and description of professional experience (or attach a resume) of the Agency manager who would provide the *day-to-day* management and support of Agency's work on this initiative:
3. Agency size and scope: number of employees, number and location of U. S. (only) offices and employees in each office, annual billings and billings by U.S. office.
4. How is your agency organized – by office, by practice or by another structure? Please describe and indicate where the CPB Dropout Initiative would be “housed” – would we be managed by a specific practice, or out of a specific office, or another arrangement?
5. Please describe your agency's experience in working on or managing national campaigns which include a heavy focus on grassroots activities.

6. Does your agency have an in-house creative department? If yes, please describe and provide several examples of campaign themes (both slogans/taglines, and graphics) that you developed. Also describe and provide several examples of campaign advertising or PSAs that you have developed.

7. Please describe your agency's experience in developing and managing partnerships, both at the national and local level. Specifically address how you identify potential partners, how you recommend approaching those partners, and how the partner relationship is managed.

8. Please check the statement that best describes how your agency conducts media outreach programs:
 - We have a dedicated media team that conducts media outreach on behalf of all the agency clients.
 - Members of our account teams conduct media outreach on behalf of our clients.
 - We use a combination of these structures (please describe).
 - Other (please describe).

9. Do you work with freelance media specialists? If yes, please describe arrangements, and if appropriate, include the names of any freelancers with whom you work on a regular basis.

10. Do you have an in-house media training function? If yes, please describe. If no, please describe how you provide these services for clients, including the name of trainer(s) with whom you routinely work.

11. Please describe why you believe your agency's media relations capabilities are superior.

12. Please describe one or more client engagements where you provided media relations work on the national and local market level simultaneously – how did you structure the process, what worked and what didn't work, results.
13. Please describe your existing in-house media monitoring and reporting capabilities.
14. Please describe your agency's capabilities and several examples of your work in cause-related marketing.
15. Please describe your agency's capabilities and experience in national/local grassroots initiatives.
16. Do you have an in-house research department, division or function? If yes, please describe the services provided and delineate those that are provided by your staff and those that are outsourced (i.e., staff member designs and manages surveys, but outside firm is used to actually administer the survey).
17. Please describe your philosophy of and process for evaluation – beyond counting, slicing, dicing and analyzing media clips. How do you work with the client to set objectives that are measurable, how do you measure, and how do you determine whether the program achieved the objectives? Please include one or two examples of an evaluation effort that went beyond clip analysis.
18. Has your agency had any experience working in the following three areas and if yes, please describe the client and program:
 - Programs that relate in any way to “storytelling.”
 - Programs that involve educator/citizen/community engagement.
 - Programs that reach youth -- particularly those in the middle/high school age group.
19. Please attach two case studies which you feel demonstrate your ability execute a program like our proposed Dropout Awareness and Youth Engagement Initiative. The cases don't have to be mirror images of the planned Dropout Initiative, but rather should show how you think creatively, how you can work at grassroots level, how you deliver media

results, etc.

20. In a campaign where you are working with multiple offices in multiple cities, how do you organize your agency team to be as efficient and cost-effective as possible?

21. Please share with us any additional information that you feel would be of interest, based on the scope of the program as described in the background section.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to receiving your response.

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