

Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency



**Request for Proposal for
Professional Services for the UTOPIA Network
RFP MKT201201 - Public Relations Services
March 1, 2012**

March 1, 2012

The Utah Telecommunications Open Infrastructure Agency (UTOPIA) invites proposals (Request for Proposals or RFP) from any party interested in a public relations relationship with UTOPIA. As further spelled out in the body of this document, UTOPIA is willing to consider creative proposals regarding service(s) offered, pricing structures, methods to better align interests and desired outcomes, and proposals to accelerate deployment and adoption of the UTOPIA network.

UTOPIA will be expanding a comprehensive public relations campaign within several Utah markets with the intent to educate residents about their communities' FTTH network and its associated benefits and services. As a municipal infrastructure project, the awareness campaign is multi-faceted and varied, with a wide variety of audiences (including the general residential population, businesses, government, and community leaders). We are very interested in hearing from any interested party. The winning proposal may result in a unique relationship opportunity for a period of time.

THIS SOLICITATION WILL CLOSE ON MARCH 22, 2012.

Please use email to direct all questions to Gary Jones (gjones@utopianet.org) with email copies of all correspondence to Julie Paulson (jpaulson@utopianet.org) and Jamie Brotherton (jbrotherton@utopianet.org). All questions must be received prior to close of business on March 15, 2012 and will be answered by a follow up email to all known prospective respondents.

We look forward to receiving your response.

Sincerely,

Todd Marriott

Executive Director, UTOPIA

Request for Proposals

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Request for Proposals

Overview

This is a request for a public relations proposal for UTOPIA (Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency).

The proposal should incorporate the development of a public relations plan and the following activities: media relations, relationship building with appropriate centers of influence, public affairs, and community relations activities that support overall marketing messages for UTOPIA.

There will be several unique opportunities for UTOPIA in 2012-2013.

We anticipate these activities would include the following:

- Arranging local media coverage including interviews and appearances
- Identifying and training key spokespersons from our company
- Identifying key organizations to which our personnel should belong
- Identifying and assisting with placing our personnel on appropriate boards and commissions
- Creating and coordinating special events
- Identifying possibilities for speaking engagements and appearances
- Educating public leaders and employees within UTOPIA municipalities
- Identifying additional public relations opportunities within the designated budget

The compensation will be negotiated between UTOPIA and the firm selected based on scope of work specifically defined. However, for the purposes of this RFP, please identify the amount your firm would propose as an hourly fee or some similar metric.

General Information

The Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency (UTOPIA) is a political subdivision of the State of Utah created by an interlocal agreement among 16 municipalities for the purpose of solving the last mile challenge in telecommunications for its member cities. UTOPIA's goal is to provide every household and every business within its boundaries access to advanced communications infrastructure, and to enable choice among services and service providers. To accomplish this objective, UTOPIA has built an open-access fiber optic network providing wholesale transport for retail telecommunications service providers. Currently, the 16 member cities account for a population base of more than 500,000 individuals, 150,000+ households, and 30,000+ businesses.

Creation/History

UTOPIA is a separate legal entity and political subdivision of the State of Utah. UTOPIA was created under the Utah Interlocal Cooperation Act and is governed by the First Amended and Restated Interlocal Cooperative Agreement of the Utah Telecommunication Open Infrastructure Agency, dated as of June 1, 2004 (the "Interlocal Cooperative Agreement"). House Bill 149 adopted by the Utah Legislature during its 2001 General Session and Senate Bill 6 adopted by the Utah Legislature during its 2004 General Session confirm the ability of municipal governments in the State of Utah to provide wholesale telecommunication services.

The Interlocal Cooperation Act authorizes local governmental units to make the most efficient use of their powers by enabling them to cooperate with other government units on the basis of mutual advantage to provide services and facilities that will best accommodate the needs and development of local communities. An entity so formed is a political subdivision of the state with power to, among other things, (i) own, acquire, construct, operate, maintain, and repair, or cause to be constructed, operated, maintained, and repaired, any facility or improvement provided for in its organization agreement, (ii) borrow money, incur indebtedness and issue revenue bonds or notes for the purposes for which it was created, and (iii) assign, pledge or otherwise convey as security or improvement within or without the State on terms deemed in the best interest of its participants.

In addition to the specific powers enumerated above which UTOPIA possesses by virtue of being a separate legal entity created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, UTOPIA's members may contract with UTOPIA to perform any government service, activity or undertaking which the members themselves are authorized to perform.

To help facilitate growth, the cities have formed another inter-local entity, called UIA (The Utah Infrastructure Agency) as a separate entity to grow the UTOPIA network and provide more oversight on the growth of our community-owned fiber optic network in our cities. It also makes it easier for other cities that are interested in having this kind of network to join down the road.

The UIA is a political subdivision of the State of Utah and was created in June 2010. Nin cities created the agency (Brigham City, Centerville, Layton, Midvale, Murray, Orem, Payson, and West Valley City).

Membership/Organization/Governance

UTOPIA currently has 16 member cities: Brigham City, Cedar City, Cedar Hills, Centerville, Layton, Lindon, Midvale, Murray, City of Orem, Payson, Perry, Riverton, Tremonton, Vineyard, Washington, West Valley City (collectively, the “Members”). UTOPIA is governed by a Board of Directors (the “Board”).

Prior Media Exposure

Over the recent years, UTOPIA’s media exposure has been local and mostly negative. This has turned around in the last year and become more neutral/positive. Our goal is to cut out negative press as much as possible and obtain national media exposure, placing us as a national leader in fiber to the premises installation.

Our Key Messages

Philosophy and Goals

The member communities of UTOPIA have taken the initiative to assure world-class digital connectivity for their residents based on the following principles:

Open Access

Similar to a public airport, the UTOPIA network has been designed for use by several service and content providers. We believe that a single open network allows more providers to competitively offer more services at lower cost.

A “neutral” network owner and “neutral” system operator are expected to encourage open access and a significant number of service providers, which will contribute to long term growth and stability for the benefit of the community.

Standards Based Architecture

The network is dependent, from a technical standpoint, on an open, standards-based architecture for broadband media content services. This assures flexibility of service, modularity, and interoperability in access, interconnection, and transport. Although the special needs of service providers can be accommodated, the principle of open standards must be preserved.

Scalability

UTOPIA’s fiber optic network has the capability of delivering significantly higher bandwidth than the networks of incumbent last mile carriers. Its architecture has the inherent flexibility to accommodate future bandwidth demands of residential, business, educational, governmental, and other customers without major re-design or construction.

Carrier Class Reliability

UTOPIA’s network strives to offer carrier class reliability service providers to offer products that can compete with those available from incumbent carriers. All partnership arrangements with system operators and service providers must support this commitment.

Physical Description

UTOPIA is in the process of expanding a wholesale telecommunications network within its member cities. The network uses fiber optic technology, which provides transmission of voice, data and video at speeds that are significantly faster than existing copper, cable, or satellite systems. Fiber is currently used for the backbone of the Internet and other high-demand applications, but has not been widely implemented over “the last mile” into homes and businesses. UTOPIA is laying the fiber optic cable necessary to connect each member city and the homes and businesses within each member city. The fiber optic cable is being laid both underground and above ground. Other elements of the network include conduits, innerducts, fiber strands, splices,

switches, transmitters, terminals, internal power sources and all other items necessary to operate the network.

The network is divided into footprints (neighborhood service areas) and interconnecting rings with design and construction partly complete in eleven member cities.

Scope of Services

UTOPIA is accepting proposals from a public relations firm to fulfill our public relations priorities as outlined below. The firm selected will work with UTOPIA staff in defining the public relations plan and related components necessary for successful execution in the business, residential, and political segments. The firm shall be directly responsible to the UTOPIA Director of Sales and Marketing.

Business/Public Relations Priorities:

- Position our company as national experts in the field
- Build customer confidence and trust in our business
- Help us bring credibility to the industry and the communities we serve
- Build public interest in and awareness of our product or service
- Cultivate diverse markets demographically and psychographics
- Raise brand awareness through philanthropic activities and sponsorships
- Attract, retain, and motivate employees
- Attract and retain customers
- Develop and maintain positive working relations with political officials

Requirements:

Prospective bidders must:

- Find pride in quick turnaround, particularly being timely in adjusting and implementing strategies according to market changes
- Be adept at adjusting to complex industries and picking up on significant industry, market, and political subtleties
- Be well versed, experienced, and comfortable in political environments and campaigns
- Be extremely collaborative; exhibit a highly personal and personable relationship with your client

Qualifications and Experience

The responses shall be used for qualification, evaluation, and contractor selection:

- Please discuss your experience with public relations and public affairs, research, and consultation.
- Demonstrate from an existing body of work the qualifications that set you apart from other organizations.
- Qualifications and experience with working with the technology, broadband, telecommunications, or related industries.
- Please tell us what size project(s) you or your company has had the responsibility of managing and what timeframes and the amount of sales activity performed.

Compensation

The compensation will be negotiated between UTOPIA and the firm selected based on the scope of work specifically defined. However, for the purpose of this RFP, please

identify the amount your firm would propose as an hourly fee or some similar metric.

This Solicitation

Proposals must follow the format prescribed below and must include the requested information. THIS SOLICITATION WILL CLOSE ON MARCH 22, 2012. The following table outlines UTOPIA's planned calendar of major events related to the RFP distribution, proposal submission, evaluation, and selection processes.

1. RFP announced to prospective respondents 3/1/2012
2. Last day for submissions of written questions 3/15/2012
3. Responses to question As Required
4. Negotiation of agreement 30 days ARP
5. Implementation of agreement complete 30 days ARP

UTOPIA reserves the right in its sole discretion to amend the above schedule. Proposals must follow the format prescribed below and must include the requested information.

Number of Copies

UTOPIA requires respondents to provide one (1) signed unbound original, clearly marked as such, plus one (1) electronic copy, via CD, of their proposal. The proposal must be organized as indicated below.

Print Format

All proposals should be printed on standard 8 ½" x 11" paper (larger paper is permissible for charts, spreadsheets, etc.).

Proposal Organization

The proposal must be organized and indexed in the following format and must contain, as a minimum, all items below in the sequence indicated:

- a. Letter of Transmittal
- b. Table of Contents
- c. Section 1: Executive Summary
- d. Section 2: Description of proposed services
- e. Section 3: Qualifications
- f. Section 4: Cost Schedule

Within each section of their proposal, respondents must address the items in the order in which they appear in the RFP.

Letter of Transmittal

A single original signed letter of transmittal must accompany the proposal. The letter must:

- a. Identify the submitted organization
- b. Identify the name and title of the person authorized to contractually obligate the organization

- c. Identify the name, title, and telephone number of the person authorized to negotiate the contract
- d. Identify the names, titles, and telephone numbers of persons to be contacted for clarification
- e. Be signed by the person authorized to contractually obligate the organization

Table of Contents

The table of contents must be placed immediately after the report cover and before the Executive Summary.

Executive Summary

Label this section "Section 1: Executive Summary." In two pages or less, highlight the significant aspects of your proposal including any observations about your understanding of the scope of solicitation that may set your proposal apart from other submitters.

Understanding and Proposed Services

Label this section "Section 2: Approach." Proposals must indicate your understanding of goals and expectations. This section should not parrot the initial sections of this RFP; rather, it should explain at a high level how your proposal response would address the key goals and criteria.

Qualifications

Label this section "Section 3: Qualifications and Experience." Provide information on key individuals, accounts or experiences that are relevant to UTOPIA's goals and/or your ability to handle high-volume, complex, quick-moving accounts.

Cost Schedule

Label this section "Section 4: Cost Schedule." Provide your proposed schedule of costs.

Clarifications

You may request clarification of any part of this RFP, but you must do so by email to Gary Jones (gjones@utopianet.org) with email correspondence copied to Julie Paulson (jpaulson@utopianet.org) and Jamie Brotherton (jbrotherton@utopianet.org) - no other type of request for clarification will be honored. All responses to requests for clarification will be provided to all interested respondents simultaneously.

As mentioned, any questions must be directed, via email, to: gjones@utopianet.org, jpaulson@utopianet.org, and jbrotherton@utopianet.org and must be received by close of business on March 15, 2012. Questions received after this cutoff time will not be answered.

UTOPIA reserves the right to obtain clarification of any point in a respondent's proposal or to obtain additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal.

Proposal Submission

The proposal package must be delivered to:

UTOPIA
Attn: Julie Paulson
2175 South Redwood Road
West Valley City, UT 84119

Proposals delivered after the cutoff time will be returned, unopened.

A Letter of Transmittal, one (1) copy of the paper-based proposal, and one (1) CD containing an electronic copy of the proposal (with support materials) must be sealed in a package showing, in addition to the address listed above, the following information on the outside:

- Respondent's Name, Contact, Phone Number, and Email Address
- Proposal - UTOPIA RFP #MKT201201 - Public Relations Services
- Proposal Due: March 22, 2012

A person(s) legally authorized to bind the respondent must sign the Letter of Transmittal. Electronic proposals must be submitted in MS Word format and MS Excel if necessary.

We are soliciting proposals from approximately [Number of firms]. Upon review of submissions, we will interview [insert number here] firms.

All proposals will be evaluated on:

- Demonstrated expertise in and understanding of telecommunications and government PR
- Understanding of and ability to meet our goals and objectives
- Firm and personnel qualifications and experience with weight given to experience of account team
- Ability of proposal to be executed within budget

Terms and Conditions

Response Material Ownership

All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of UTOPIA and will only be returned to the respondent at UTOPIA's option. Any person may review responses after final selection has been made. UTOPIA has the right to use any or all system ideas presented in reply to this request, subject to limitations outlined below in "Proprietary Information."

Disqualification of a respondent does not eliminate this right.

Proprietary Information

UTOPIA is subject to the disclosure requirements of the Government Records Access and Management Act (GRAMA), Title 63, Chapter 2, Utah Code Annotated. UTOPIA generally considers Agreements, Contract Documents, and all accompanying material to be public and subject to disclosure. A written claim of confidentiality and a concise written statement of reasons supporting the claim must accompany any material considered by respondents to be proprietary. Blanket claims that the entire Agreement or Contract Documents are confidential will be denied by UTOPIA. UTOPIA cannot guarantee that any information will be held confidential. Under Section 63-2-304 of the Government Records Access and Management Act, if a respondent makes a claim of confidentiality, UTOPIA, upon receipt of a request for disclosure, will determine whether the material should be classified as public or protected, and will notify the respondent of such determination. UTOPIA agrees to hold all information classified as protected in confidence and protect it from public disclosure in accordance with such statutes to the greatest extent permitted by Utah law. UTOPIA may disclose such information to the extent required by law; however, UTOPIA will provide respondents prompt notice of request for disclosure of such protected information and will cooperate with respondents in seeking the issuance of protective order, at their cost.

Respondents are entitled under the Government Records Access and Management Act to appeal an adverse determination regarding the classification of information. UTOPIA is not required to notify respondents of a request for non-protected information, and will not consider a claim of confidentiality unless the respondent's claim of confidentiality is made on a timely basis and in accordance with the Government Records Access and Management Act.

Conflicts of Interest

Proposed solutions to this RFP must be defined in such a way as to prevent and prohibit conflicts of interest between the respondent, UTOPIA, and other service providers that may offer services across the UTOPIA network.

Incurring Costs

UTOPIA is not liable for any costs you incur prior to issuance of a formally signed and executed written agreement, contract or purchase order. Costs of developing the proposals, oral presentations or any other such expenses incurred by the respondent in responding to the RFP are entirely your responsibility, and will not be reimbursed in any manner by UTOPIA.

Miscellaneous

Respondents should be aware of the following requirements.

No Discrimination in Employment

In connection with the proposed partnership arrangement, respondents agree not to refuse to hire, discharge, promote or demote, or to discriminate in matters of compensation against any person otherwise qualified, solely because of race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, or sexual orientation.

New Releases

News releases and/or advertising pertaining to this procurement or any part of the subject may not be made without prior, written approval of UTOPIA.

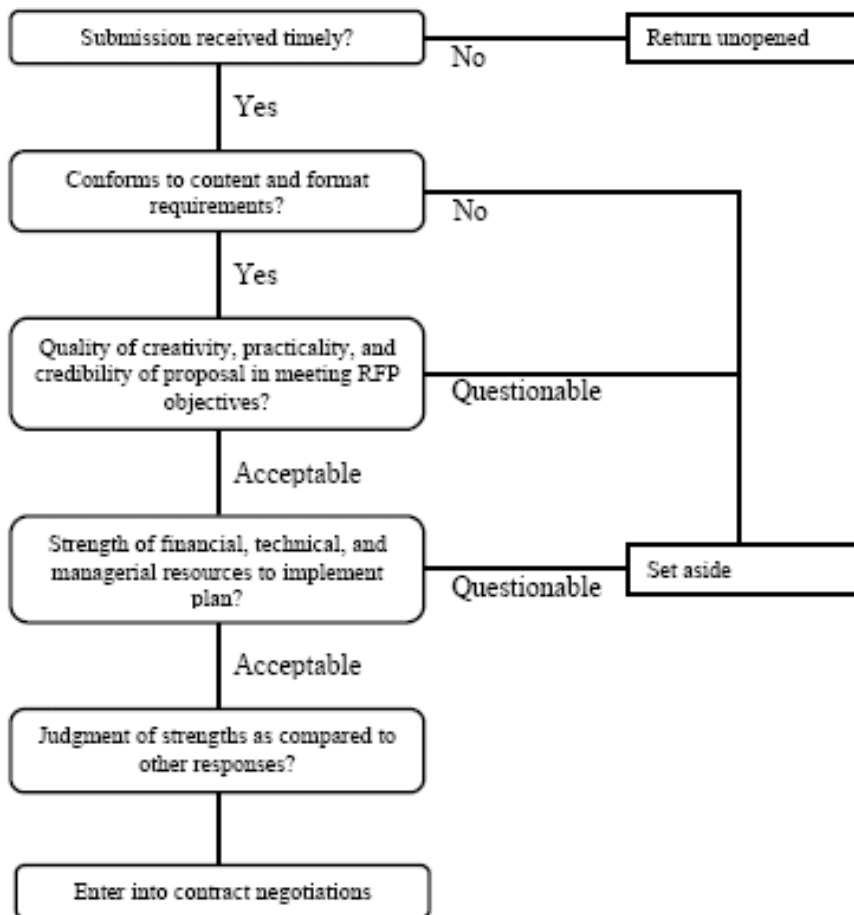
Selection Process

UTOPIA considers your response to the substantive content of this RFP to be the most important element in the evaluation/selection process. We are looking for proposals that reflect a practical, credible, and cost effective approach to selling telecommunications connections and services in the residential market. To this end, each response will be judged in its entirety as outlined below.

Evaluation Process and Criteria

The evaluation of responses will follow the logical path outlined in Figure 1. At each step, reviewers will focus on specific criteria as described below. However, we reserve the right to overlook any irregularity or waive any requirement when, in UTOPIA's sole discretion, doing so would inure to UTOPIA's benefit.

Figure 1 *Proposal Evaluation Process*



Submission Conformance Review

The Solicitation section of this document provides directions about the content and organization that we expect to see in your response. If your proposal contains material

omissions or fails to follow the organization guidelines given in this RFP, it will be at risk of being set aside from any further evaluation. We will not open any proposal that arrives after the filing deadline.

Proposal Responsiveness Evaluation

The review committee will review the quality and responsiveness of your proposal by separately considering the following elements:

- a. Practicality. There are well-understood strategic and tactical resource requirements associated with executing UTOPIA's sales objectives. Any proposal must demonstrate ability to meet these needs.
- b. Credibility. Your proposal will need to give reviewers a high level of confidence that your team has the competence, the human resources, and the financial resources needed to put the proposal into operation.
- c. Cost Effective. UTOPIA understands the value of paying premium prices for premium services. However, heavy weight will be placed on cost effectiveness when comparing your proposal to others.

Organizational Capacity Review

In addition to the judgments that reviewers can derive from your description of the proposed strategy, they may need to be able to corroborate your representations by appeals to third parties. Accordingly, the evaluation process will include such reference checking and fact verification, as the review committee deems necessary before reaching a conclusion about selecting the winning offer.

Acceptance of Proposal

UTOPIA retains the right, at its sole discretion, to select or not select respondents to be included in further negotiations at any point during the evaluation process. The contents of the proposal of the successful respondent may become contractual obligations, if we determine to proceed with implementation.

False or Misleading Statements

If, in the opinion of UTOPIA, a proposal contains false or misleading statements or references, it will be rejected. However, before removing a proposal from consideration, we will notify the submitter of our concern and allow the submission of an explanation. UTOPIA's decision, after considering any explanatory information will be final.

Rejection of Proposals

Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by UTOPIA to award a contract. If it is deemed in the best interest of UTOPIA to do so, UTOPIA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any informalities or minor irregularities in proposals received or to accept any portion of a proposal or all items proposed, or to reject any and all proposals received in response to this RFP, or to cancel the RFP.