



Pennsylvania
Association for
Sustainable Agriculture

**The Pennsylvania Association for
Sustainable Agriculture (PASA)
104 North St
PO Box 419
Millheim, PA 16854**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: Professional Services - Communications

RFP Proposal Due Date: May 10, 2013; 5:00PM EST

**NOTICE TO BIDDERS
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - COMMUNICATION SERVICES**

Dear Potential Communications Contractor:

You are invited to submit a proposal in response to this Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA) for the purpose of creating and implementing a comprehensive communications program. The RFP provides a detailed outline of communications goals and responsibilities.

All individuals and firms submitting proposals must be qualified to provide these professional services and will be required to articulate/present relevant experiences in support of their proposal.

PASA reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals. PASA does not discriminate on the basis of political affiliation, race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or handicapped status in employment or provision of service.

An electronic copy of your complete proposal must be received by no later than 5:00 p.m. EST on Friday, May 10, 2013. The email address for submission of this RFP is info@pasafarming.org. Faxed proposals will not be accepted.

LATE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED REGARDLESS OF THE REASON.

Please insert, "PROPOSAL ATTACHED RFP – COMMUNICATIONS" in capital letters in the subject line of the e-mail. You will receive an email response indicating that your proposal was received along with the time and date it was received.

It is expected that the evaluation of proposals and the selection of the contractor will be completed within three weeks following the proposal deadline. Questions about this RFP should be directed to: Michele Gauger, Membership Director at PASA, michele@pasafarming.org, 814-349-9856 x17.

Thank you for your interest in supporting PASA!

SCOPE OF CONTRACTED WORK

(a) Object/Purpose: PASA is seeking a successful Applicant to act as the professional provider of communications services including development and implementation of a comprehensive communications program for the Association.

(b) Qualifications: The Applicant must have a minimum of five (5) years proven experience and knowledge in the field of public relations/public affairs planning and implementation of a comprehensive program.

(c) Hours: PASA anticipates expected hours will be adjusted on a quarterly basis depending on short-term objectives in place at the time and financial resources available to support the work.

(d) Reporting requirements: The successful Applicant will report to the Membership Director of PASA and will submit such reports or other documentation on assigned projects as PASA shall require.

(e) Compensation/Method of Payment: Applicant shall state the hourly fee basis upon which they expect to be compensated as part of their proposals. The selected Applicant will submit a monthly report detailing each billable hour. PASA does not reimburse for out-of-pocket expenses. Bids should take into consideration all costs for providing services.

(f) Location/Performance of Services: Unless otherwise requested by PASA for particular projects, the successful Applicant will perform services at their own offices.

(g) Independent Contractor: The relationship of the Applicant and PASA shall remain that of independent contractor and not that of an employee, partner, or joint venture partner. Therefore, with respect to any funds paid to the selected Applicant under the resulting contract with PASA, PASA will not deduct, withhold or pay, and it shall be the selected Applicant's responsibility to pay, any FICA (social security), federal income tax, state income tax, City wage tax, net profits or business tax, insurance, unemployment benefit insurance, workers compensation benefits, or any other payments that ordinarily are made or withheld by the employer for itself or for on behalf of its employees.

Independent contractor will be required to provide PASA with a completed IRS W-9 form prior to the issuance of the initial contractor payment.

(h) Expected time period of the contract: June 2013 - June 2014; with potential for extension based on outcomes.

RFP SUBMISSION

RFP responses will be received via e-mail by PASA no later than **May 10, 2013 by 5:00 P.M. EST**. PASA will not pay any costs incurred by any Applicant associated with any aspect of responding to this solicitation, including proposal preparation or contract negotiation.

RFP QUESTIONS

All questions shall be directed to Michele Gauger, Membership Director of PASA on or before May 3, 2013.

TENTATIVE TIMETABLE

Post RFP	April 15, 2013
Questions due	May 3, 2013
Deadline for RFP submittals	May 10, 2013
Interviews (discretionary)	Week of May 20, as necessary
Decision by Authority	On or before June 3, 2013
Contract Negotiation and Award	

**INFORMATION REQUIRED FROM APPLICANTS
SCOPE OF WORK****Strategic Communications Plan**

PASA is seeking to contract with an individual or organization that would develop and assist PASA in implementing a defined comprehensive communications plan. The successful bidder will also be responsible for the following:

a) Develop a detailed and overarching communications strategy that includes the articulation of goals for branding PASA's programs and services.

The communications strategy must include a reliable means of identifying the communications needs of PASA's members and key stakeholders for the purpose of promoting broader understanding of sustainable agriculture by a variety of stakeholders, including: our members; farmers; the general public; business leaders; education policymakers; legislators; regulators; funders.

The communications strategy must include multiple points of access to information about PASA, including but not limited to print media, websites, streaming audio and video presentations, and links to common social media, blogs, and podcasts.

b) Create and maintain a detailed project plan that describes the full scope of work in which the Applicant is engaged.

c) Evaluate the effectiveness of and update the strategies at four milestone points across the life of the contract. In roughly 3-month intervals, evaluate the success of the strategic efforts and, as necessary, redefine the communications strategy to respond to changing needs of internal and external customers.

d) Develop appropriate collateral material, as required, including design and graphic services, as required.

Association Branding

Analyze the current status of PASA's brand identity and advise the Association on strategies to improve/increase its brand exposure. Assist PASA in the identification and elaboration of its unique features and develop branding strategies that communicate those strengths.

Evaluate and provide recommendations for design and features to improve PASA's websites - pasafarming.org, buylocalpa.org, goodfoodneighborhood.org, farmleaseconnection.org & writetofarm.com

Communications Support

Assist with development and distribution of messages targeting PASA stakeholders through a variety of platforms including blogs, social media, weekly e-newsletters and bimonthly print newsletters.

Develop multimedia communication tools the Association, including our regional offices, can use for their communications purposes. Some of these tools may be of a generic sort that can be used on several occasions; some may be one-time-only supports that are specific to a particular event. These tools would include, but not be limited to:

- Timelines for public release of informational materials;
- An overview of communication processes and products (e.g., arrangements for media coverage, talking points, and illustrations needed for all spokespersons within PASA);
- Materials for public consumption, such as templates for PowerPoint presentations, brochures, pamphlets, information letters, and newsletters; and
- Assist with the drafting and editing of important documents that are developed for public audiences, such as press releases, newsletters, brochure materials, position papers, project descriptions, etc.

Support for Reporting Systems

Monitor information sources (news, blogs, analyst reports, online and traditional media) for third party commentary on PASA.

Develop a systematic means for PASA to monitor Web usage; include Web metrics in regular reviews and evaluations, and make recommendations based on those metrics.

Strategic Communications Goals

Goal 1 – Identify key stakeholders, and create an infrastructure for communications. The successful bidder will identify target audiences that have an interest (or should have an interest) in information about PASA & our programs; such as Buy Fresh Buy Local®, Good Food Neighborhood®, Farm-Based Education, Farm Lease Connection, *Farming for the Future* Conference, etc.

- a) Identify, broaden the scope of new partnerships or stakeholders to engage furthering PASA’s mission & outreach.
- b) Further enhance & add meaningful contacts to PASA’s CRM database for more effective and coordinated communication efforts.

Goal 2 – Create a broad-based plan to enhance communications to all audiences.

- a) Articulate communications objectives, strategies, and a tactical one-year plan.
- b) Work in collaboration with PASA staff managers to re-develop content of our websites - pasafarming.org, buylocalpa.org, goodfoodneighborhood.org, farmleaseconnection.org and writetofarm.com based on a stronger public engagement strategy.

Goal 3 - Revenue generation; explore opportunities within the communications plan to create a variety of advertising or paid resource offerings; be it via our websites, newsletters or other developed communications strategies.

Goal 4 – Identify benchmarks, quarterly performance measures and a timeline for achieving the above goals.

- a) Articulate specific measures of performance for this plan, a defined budget and timeline for initiating/completing major projects, and programming a calendar of events/activity for each month.

Qualifications

Organizational Qualifications

- i. Describe your organization and its experience in providing the Scope of Work. Identify any relevant accreditations.
- ii. Describe projects or work completed by your organization that are of similar scope and magnitude related to the professional services that are the subject of this RFP.

Individual Qualifications

- i. Applicants are required to provide the names, job titles, and descriptions, training, and experience qualifications for each staff person who will be assigned to perform the work. Please include resumes or CVs of all personnel expected to work as set forth in your proposal.
- ii. Additionally, to the extent not already addressed or set forth in resume form, individual Applicants are required to identify their qualifications to perform the work required by this RFP, including how they meet the minimum qualifications stated in this RFP.

The successful organization or individual will also have demonstrated knowledge of and experience in working with traditional print media, television, radio, and social/digital media outlets.

References

Provide a list of at least three (3) clients for whom you have provided or are providing public relations services or related work. For each client, provide the following information:

Client's name;

Names, titles, address, and phone numbers for contacts at each client:

Duration of the relationship;

Types of services provided;

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