

Request for Proposals: Communications and marketing services in support of the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION: Name: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Inc.
Address: 6 Herndon Ave., Annapolis, MD 21403
Contact: Emily Day, Communications Operations Manager, eday@cbf.org

ISSUE DATE: March 3, 2021

SUMMARY OF NEED: The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization working to save the Chesapeake Bay and restore clean water to its rivers and streams. The Bay jurisdictions are halfway through a 15-year, federal/state plan—known as the Chesapeake Clean Water Blueprint—that most scientists believe is the last, best hope for restoration. Unlike previous voluntary federal/state agreements, the Blueprint has transparency, accountability, and consequences for failure. It is to be fully implemented by 2025.

Pennsylvania is significantly behind on its Blueprint commitment, which calls for 96,000 acres of forested buffers to be planted statewide from 2015 to 2025. Understanding the immense undertaking at hand, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation launched the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership (K10) in 2018. The Partnership is a collaborative effort by national, regional, state, and local agencies, conservation organizations, outdoors enthusiasts, businesses, and citizens, aimed at facilitating the planting of 10 million new trees in priority landscapes in Pennsylvania by the end of 2025.

Campaign target outcomes:

- Stop millions of pounds of nitrogen from flowing down the Susquehanna and Potomac Rivers into the Bay.
- Put Pennsylvania’s Blueprint commitment for riparian buffers and urban tree canopy back on track.
- Inspire and equip a diverse coalition to demand public action for clean water and meeting the Blueprint goals.

Core strategies:

- Plant 3.2 million trees through CBF restoration and direct Keystone Partnership investments.
- Stimulate the planting of 785,000 trees through new financing programs and Blueprint accountability.
- Support progress of 750,000 annual tree plantings through continued support and maintenance of current programs.
- Launch an interface to connect landowners and industry.
- Deploy an advocacy campaign to grow volunteers, landowners, and public officials to fight for trees, clean water, and Blueprint goals.

To date, more than 167 organizations have joined the Partnership. Benefits include free trees, restoration support, access to new technology, and invitations to special workshops and events.

The Partnership’s biggest challenge is finding landowners with properties appropriate for restoration and motivating them to adopt and maintain riparian buffers as a best management practice. It can take years of repeat visits before a landowner decides to take action. To meet the demands of the Blueprint, the time between initial contact and the desired behavior must be drastically

reduced. Research conducted in 2018 has provided a thorough understanding of the behaviors and spending habits of target landowners.

Since 2018, approximately two million trees have been planted. And while there are many opportunities for volunteers, and funds available for willing landowners, the pace needs to pick up considerably to meet the 10-million-tree goal. Heightened efforts require recruiting new landowners, expanding partnerships, soliciting help from volunteers, and raising financial support.

Currently only 14 percent of Pennsylvanians are familiar with the Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership. CBF has heard repeatedly from K10 Partners that navigating funding options is difficult because there is not a central location to find information and get involved. This is where strategic marketing efforts will play a critical role in ensuring 10 million new trees are added in priority landscapes so that the Commonwealth reaches its clean water obligations.

THE PROJECT:

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation seeks the expertise of a qualified communications and marketing consultant to help develop and produce effective Keystone 10 Million Trees campaign elements that support the following objectives:

- Recruit 19,000 landowners to restore riparian buffers on their property by the end of 2025.
- Position the K10 Partnership as the go-to, “one-stop-shop” resource for tree and riparian buffer restoration, education, funding sources, and volunteer opportunities in Pennsylvania.
- Provide K10 campaign staff, partners, and volunteers with the resources necessary to spread awareness and recruit support.

Secondary objectives:

- Help enlist 600,000 volunteers to plant, monitor, and maintain trees by the end of 2025.

Target audiences:

- Landowners with property in the lower, five-county portion of southcentral Pennsylvania (Franklin, Adams, York, Cumberland, and Lancaster), that have the highest likelihood of engaging with outreach efforts to plant trees on their property.
- Keystone 10 Million Trees Partners
- Pennsylvania citizens (outdoor conservatives and recreational enthusiasts), legislators, public officials, church members, teachers, and students.

The timeframe of the project is May 2021 through June 30, 2022, with the potential for an annual extension through the end of 2024.

SCOPE OF WORK:

The consultant will work collaboratively with CBF marketing to produce and execute effective Keystone 10 Million Trees (K10) Partnership campaign elements that increase awareness and support established marketing objectives. Strategies will be based on priority, needs, and cost. Efforts may include, but are not limited to:

Plan, negotiate and buy statewide media to effectively reach target audiences and maximize budgets. This may include television, radio, print, outdoor, online, nontraditional media, and outreach to diverse communities. Craft public service announcements and press kits as needed.

Website navigation revamp and updates. Optimize site to improve landowner recruitment and resources. Launch, maintain, and monitor K10 Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter social media accounts in accordance with CBF social media guidelines. Implement strategies to increase organic reach and engagement of website and social platforms.

Creative briefs, production timelines, advertising concepts, video production, copywriting, and creative services. Consultant will be responsible for developing and designing materials in formats suitable for print and/or web. All creative is to be developed and produced in accordance with K10 logo, name, and language use guidelines, and must be approved by CBF prior to production and/or distribution.

Messages should appeal to target landowner's' strong family and land legacy values, tendency to act philanthropically, belief in helping others, desire for autonomy, and 'do-it-yourself' nature.

Track and evaluate key metrics. Bi-monthly reports should include decisions and next steps to ensure campaign is staying true to its objectives.

Bi-weekly check-ins will be coordinated to make the most of last-minute opportunities as they occur. Campaign evaluations are to be provided twice a year.

Itemized invoices will be delivered quarterly.

When submitting a bid, please break down costs and timeline.

THE SCHEDULE:

- We request that proposals be delivered electronically to CBF staff member Emily Day no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, 3/24/21.
- CBF intends to make a decision no later than 5/1/21. Applicants will be notified when a decision for award of the bid is made.
- Work should begin in May 2021 and end by June 30, 2022, with potential for annual extension through the end of 2024.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

At a minimum, you must have the following qualifications and provide:

- The name and full contact information of your company and, if applicable, any other entity comprising your team. Please attach resumes or bios of staff who would be involved.

- Estimated availability/working schedule.
- Billable rate.
- List and describe three projects completed within the previous five years that are relevant to this project and/or within the region identified above.
- List two client references, and their contact information, for whom you or your team members have completed work like that described in this RFP.
- Include basic information and history about the business entity, including financial information, technical capability, and any other information you feel is important for us to know.

MINORITY PARTICIPATION: CBF actively encourages proposals from Small, Women and Minority Owned (SWAM) Businesses. Please note if you are a Small, Women or Minority Owned Business and if you are certified by the State/Commonwealth/DC.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS: Emily Day, Communications Operations Manager, eday@cbf.org

BID RESPONSE FORM

Please complete the following information for your response:

1. The name and full contact information of your company and, if applicable, any other entity comprising your team: [Attach resumes of individuals involved.]
2. List and describe two projects completed within the previous five years that are relevant to this project. If the relevance is not immediately obvious, please describe briefly the relationship as you see it: [Attach additional information as appropriate.]
3. List two client references, and their contact information, for whom you or your team members have completed work similar to that described in this RFP:
4. Include basic information and history about the business entity, financial information, technical capability, and any other information you feel is important for us to know.
5. Fee Proposal, detailed to the greatest extent possible – cost for service: hourly rates (if applicable), typical direct out-of-pocket costs such as travel reimbursement, copies, mailings, etc., and any other anticipated expenses that you foresee:
6. Additional information, such as you/your team members' particular experiences, training, and/or academic background(s) that may make you uniquely qualified for this position: [Attach additional materials as appropriate.]

A successful applicant may need to provide proof of insurance based on the services or product provided.

The undersigned certifies that the information submitted above is true and accurate.

The undersigned certifies that the person, firm, association, copartnership or corporation herein named, has not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement, participated in any collusion, or otherwise taken any action in restraint of free competitive bidding in the preparation and submission of a proposal to the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for consideration in the award of a contract.

The undersigned further certifies that the firm, association, or corporation or any person in a controlling capacity associated therewith or any position involving the administration of federal funds; is not currently under suspension, debarment, voluntary exclusion, or determination of ineligibility by any federal agency; has not been suspended, debarred voluntarily excluded, or determined ineligible by any federal agency within the past three years; does not have a proposed debarment pending; and has not been indicted, convicted, or had a civil judgment rendered against said person, firm, association, or corporation by a court of competent jurisdiction on any manner involving fraud or official misconduct within the last three years.

I further acknowledge that by signing this page of the proposal, I am deemed to have agreed to the provisions of the affidavit.

(Name of Firm)

(Authorized Signature)

(Title)

(Please print Name)

(Date)