



AFRICAN WILDLIFE
FOUNDATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

AWF Influencer Strategy

October 2020

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Overview

African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) is the leading international conservation organization focused exclusively on Africa's wildlife and wild lands. Founded in 1961 to focus on Africa's conservation needs, AWF continues to espouse a uniquely African vision, bridging science and public policy, and demonstrating the benefits of conservation to ensure the survival of the continent's wildlife and wild lands.

AWF recently announced a new [10-year plan](#) for 2020-2030. This included a messaging shift envisioned to help guide the organization through the next decade, ensuring that Africa's wildlife and wild lands thrive and evolve to become a more integral part of Africa's economic development. AWF's 10-year strategic goals are to:

- 1) **Enhance effectiveness and prominence of African conservation practitioners and elevate environmental and conservation issues to national, continental and international priority.**
- 2) **Reduce habitat loss through improved planning, monitoring and supportive economic investment.**
- 3) **Conserve Africa's wildlife in-situ and reduce poaching and trafficking as major causes of wildlife decline.**

To advance the overarching goals above, AWF is guided by a strategic communications plan that aims to advance five specific goals:

1. **Brand positioning:** AWF is positioned as a homegrown voice of African conservation on the global stage, to promote African conservation leadership as influential in sustainable development plans and projects. AWF will expand multimedia storytelling capabilities to highlight African voices describing the impact of COVID-19 on conservation.
2. **Narrative shift:** Conservation is viewed as integral to sustainable development in modern Africa. Sustained livelihood shall be a central theme, to serve as a deterrent to poaching, notably in context of COVID-19.
3. **Behavior change:** AWF believes that behaviors must change to better support wildlife and wildlands conservation. AWF is working to achieve greater understanding among target audiences around the linkage between zoonotic viruses and its mission and work. As part of this goal, AWF seeks to engage African youth audiences and increase its brand visibility and engagement with multiple audiences in China.
4. **Marketing and fundraising:** AWF seeks stronger connections with donors and supporters (current and prospective) in authentic relationship with the organization. AWF is positioning a newly-designed Safari Program as a unique conservation experience to serve as a vehicle to drive expanded fundraising and interest among top-level donors.
5. **Capacity Building:** AWF is undergoing an organization-wide process to strengthen external communications resources, including staff training on three continents. development of curriculum and position papers on key policies, which may to some degree influence who we select to represent our brand and influencer campaign themes.

AWF Ambassadors Program

AWF seeks to establish an Ambassador Program – a wide-ranging network of brand ambassadors, consisting of well-respected celebrities, high profile individuals, media properties or micro-influencer to support our organization in achieving the following objectives:

- **Brand visibility** – Through greater visibility of the AWF brand is, our programs can be more successful at influencing how conservation is perceived and prioritized by our target audiences. Brand visibility is also crucial for AWF resource mobilization.
- **Narrative shift and Behavior change** – AWF seeks a global platform for thought leadership on issues pertaining to conservation and economic development in Africa. Our aim is to create dialogues with African leadership and build a movement that ensures the survival of the continent's wildlife and wildlands, and elevates African voices and perspectives to be more represented in global dialogues where decision is made regarding Africa's natural resources and development agenda.
- **Youth engagement** – Nearly 60 percent of Africa's population in 2019 was under the age of 25, making Africa the world's youngest continent. This year, the median age in Africa is 19.8. African youth are increasingly the decision makers when it comes to natural resource allocation, and this demographic is often thrust into local influencer roles and leadership positions earlier in life. AWF seeks to leverage Africa's large youth segment (as both voters and consumers) to help it influence local governments and authorities to create policies that are pro-conservation.
- **Donor engagement** – AWF plans to leverage and work through the Brand Ambassadors Program to call on its broad donor base to help sustain funding for a prolonged effort. Our benchmarks for growth from 2020-2030 factor largely in this commitment, with AWF revenue and donor expansion targets expected to double the size of the organization from \$30M to \$60M USD by 2030.
- **AWF 60th Anniversary** – In October 2021, AWF will be marking 60 years of conservation impact in Africa since its inception in 1961. There will be multiple opportunities to amplify our engagement with our key stakeholders through communications and we envision Brand Ambassadors playing a key role.

Target Audiences

For the Ambassador program, we want to focus on the following key audiences that we deem important in helping influence the critical masses are essential in driving the change we want to see in the next 10 years of our organization strategy. These audiences include primarily:

- **Donors:** Individuals in key donor markets, including the United States, United Kingdom, Europe and China. This includes: 1) current and prospective donors; major donors (including Wall Street and leading environmental philanthropists), mid-level donors, sustainers (including young donors and millennials); 2) foundations in the US, and the UK and Europe as well; and 3) the corporate audience where new or expanded engagements are the results of this campaign.
- **African youth (aged between 18-35)** – Africa's population and AWF's vision focuses on the importance of the youth and ensuring that they are part of the conservation narrative from the on-set. AWF believes that for conservation to be effective and sustainable, it must be Africa-led and thus the need to empower and equip the youth with proper knowledge and skills focused on nature-based solutions.

Scope of Work

The four core outputs of this engagement below will be accomplished in sequence, as respondents are advanced through the RFP process – NOI phase (#1-2) including agency overview, expertise and methodology and client examples outlined in detail below; Ambassador Program Presentations phase (#3); and the Proposal Finalist Review stage (#4):

1. In partnership with key AWF staff, RFP respondents will develop a robust global brand ambassadors' strategy to meet our key objectives for the program.
2. Compilation of a well-researched, wide-ranging list of proposed brand ambassador candidates, aptly suited and aligned with AWF target audiences in the US, Africa, Europe and China. NOTE: The list should be supported with verification on the influencers' follower counts across social media platforms, notable works, publications, awards and other forms public exposure, and any information available on how proposed ambassador candidates for the AWF program might move their personal audiences to AWF's online platforms and social media, to help measure program performance by engagement, clicks, and conversions instead of potential reach.
3. Development of brand-ambassadors recruitment materials, including terms of reference for the AWF, defining the purpose and structures of its program respectively, including descriptions of working groups, planning committees, or any collection of people on the contractor side, who will be working together to accomplish the ambassadors-recruitment phase.
4. During the RFP "Finalist Review" phase the awarded firm/agency will work directly with AWF staff, and be responsible for good faith outreach to prospective brand ambassador candidates in order to secure several prospective candidates, who may be willing to sign off on participation in the AWF program. This phase will go quickly if research and outreach has been done in advance, and people are already in the pipeline for consideration.

Qualifications

AGENCY OVERVIEW

- Please provide a company profile, length of time in business, and core competencies.
- How many full-time staff does your firm employ? Briefly describe the percentage of your staff that would be working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full-time equivalents). If you will be engaging sub-contractors please include a list of contractors. Use of subcontractors does not disqualify any agencies, but AWF reserves the right of refusal on sub-contracts.
- Describe your experience in producing and brand ambassador programs for non-profit and/or for-profit organizations. Note: Non-profit experience is desirable but not required.
- Include samples of global work — in particular work on the African continent. Experience working in Africa is not required, but desirable.

EXPERTISE AND METHODOLOGY

- Please outline your approach to the discovery, development and launch process.
- What are your principles and fundamental approach to project management and communication with the client?
- How do you determine key performance indicators for an influencer campaign of this type?

CLIENT EXAMPLES

- List at least three active campaigns your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Please include the URL of each campaign.
- Please provide current reference information for three former or current clients.

Influencer Criteria

AWF seeks to cultivate a group of people with a vested personal interest and intellectual connection with wildlife conservation in Africa – a small number of highly visible personalities with global name-recognition, who are potentially open to a long-term relationship with the organization for the production of testimonials, PSAs, evergreen video content, and unique opportunities for African youth engagement.

With US, African, European and Chinese target audiences, AWF will leverage brand ambassadors for business partnerships, safari and field program visits, and even narration of short documentaries.

In addition to the significant youth audience in Africa, AWF seeks to engage potential donors across all levels, who are passionate about conservation, including HNWI sector, major donors on and off Wall Street, environmental philanthropists and the foundation audience across our markets.

As a snapshot representation of the celebrity profile AWF does not seek to engage, please review the open letter, sent July 14, 2020, from Resource Africa and its partners to celebrities, Ricky Gervais, Jonanna Lumley, Peter Egan, Ed Sheeran, Dame Judy Dench and Piers Morgan at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JcZ1tOsFQx0&feature=youtu.be>.

Important Dates

RFP Phase	Requirements	Dates
Recruitment	Response phase, including multi-part written proposal with pricing and case studies	10/30/20 – 11/30/20
Finalist Selection/Notification	AWF to notify three finalists with specific questions and/or if there are missing criteria from the respective proposals	11/30/20 – 12/04/20
Ambassador Program Presentations	Agencies and groups included in the final process will present in-person at AWF Washington, D.C. offices. Finalist presentations shall include customized international ambassador proposals to represent AWF core issues in the US, Africa, Europe and China.	12/14/20 – 12/31/20 <i>*In-person finalist meetings subject to COVID-19 CDC and local social distancing, office closures, etc., and will otherwise be held remotely.</i>
Proposal Finalist Review	AWF shall work directly to finalize the engagement with the selected firm.	01/01/21 – 01/15/21
Contract Award	Phase I work to start	01/22/21 – 06/22/21

Budget

As a launch point for the AWF Brand Ambassador program, AWF is committing a maximum of \$50,000 to secure a partner for our search in 2021. The RFP Committee will review proposals at all price points, however, to determine how best to proceed, and we encourage respondents to be forthcoming and transparent with anticipated costs and conditions to maximize results across 2021-22 and beyond.

Confidentiality Terms

AWF is not obligated to award business based on the results of this Request for Proposal (RFP). Information contained in this RFP is confidential and proprietary to AWF and will not be shared or disclosed to third parties or viewed by persons not actively working on a proposal on behalf of the respondent. All expenses for participation in this RFP, including documents preparation, communications, demonstrations, and possibly travel are entirely the responsibility of the respondent and will not be chargeable to AWF.

Disclaimer

By submitting a response to this RFP, it is assumed that the respondent agrees to the following conditions:

Please contact Patrick Mitchell with questions regarding any part of the evaluation process.

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