

**COMMUNICATION SERVICE FOR THE DEAF (CSD)**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS for PUBLIC & MEDIA RELATIONS**  
**SERVICES**

**DATE OF ISSUE:** March 6, 2017

**DEADLINE:** April 1, 2017

**CONTACT:**

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Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD)  
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**REQUEST:**

**Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD)** is requesting proposals from qualified firms to help expand mainstream national press coverage and build recognition of our CSD story. More than a public relations firm, we seek an advocate in the form of an enterprising and energetic partner to plan, coordinate, and administer public relations and media relations services on our behalf. The selected vendor will be retained for a preliminary period of 3-6 months and reevaluated based upon ROI and budget.

**ABOUT CSD:**

CSD is the largest non-profit organization for Deaf people in the world with over 40 years of experience. We have an operating budget of over \$30 million and over 800 employees located all over the United States and around the world. Recently, we adopted a virtual office structure to allow us to expand our services and programs and hire the most talented individuals - regardless of their location.

CSD's mission is to serve as inspiration for each Deaf person to achieve self-actualization. Our programs and services (CSD Creative, CSD Neighborhood, CSD Direct, and Vineya) are tools and resources to support Deaf people in that journey. You can learn about these programs on our website at [www.csd.org](http://www.csd.org). (Note: we are launching a new website in March)

As a Deaf-centric organization, our social media efforts with Facebook and Instagram are focused on the Deaf Community. Our Twitter and LinkedIn accounts have a mixture of both a Deaf and B2B approach. We are not looking for any support with Social Media or with news outlets whose niche is the Deaf population. CSD also has an in-house creative team comprised of Deaf individuals who do design, videography and marketing.

**OVERVIEW**

The prospective firms replying to this RFP will have relevant experience and expertise. Supporting documentation must thoroughly describe how the firm has supplied expertise for similar contracts and work related to planning, coordination, and implementation of public relations and media relations services. We expect to gain a clear understanding of how firm would approach the projects outlined in the *Scope of Work*. A proven experience in advocacy representation with strong presence in Washington, DC is recommended.

## **CHALLENGE**

Under the leadership of our CEO Chris Soukup who has been at the helm for the past three years we have we have grown significantly. As a Deaf centric organization, CSD has a substantial social media operation and strong footing with media outlets covering issues related to the Deaf community. We are now positioned to reach a larger audience and expand awareness of our concerns through mainstream media channels.

CSD is keenly interested in sharing our story to educate and build awareness. With the new administration in Washington we are determined to have an impact on the response to issues affecting people with disabilities and employment. For example, at CSD we are actively confronting the unemployment epidemic. 70% of Deaf people are unemployed or underemployed and we're taking the lead on the public policy front with innovative programs to combat this issue.

Our intention in hiring an outside public relations firm is to partner with a vendor who can help us to advance our mission and make an impact. Our stories are newsworthy and if framed properly will surely resonate with the general population.

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The *Scope of Work* is designed to encourage aggressive, proactive media outreach to increase mainstream visibility of CSD, our work, our services and advocacy on behalf of our constituency. It will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Strategic development of overall public and media relations plan for CSD.
2. Executing targeted public relations campaigns to generate mainstream national, regional and local media coverage.
3. Identifying and framing substantive, newsworthy content and story ideas to generate expanded national media coverage.
4. Targeting key print, TV, radio and online mainstream media outlets to secure news coverage, feature stories, profile articles, event listings and interviews.
5. Coordinating messaging with CSD designated individuals and partners.
6. Conduct outreach to arrange media interviews.
7. Media training to coach key CSD leadership to prepare for interviews.
8. Writing, formatting, distributing and placing press releases, white papers, opinion articles with print, online and broadcast media outlets.
9. Planning press conferences and media opportunities when appropriate to drive coverage.
10. Tracking coverage and measuring overall efforts, delivering weekly reports and comprehensive reports monthly (including estimated number of impressions and media value)
11. Sending media clips on a regular basis; tracking coverage and measuring efforts.

## **PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:**

The proposal should focus on addressing the firm's ability to provide the services outlined in the *Scope of Work*. Please provide the following:

1. A cover letter signed by an officer of the firm including a primary contact person for the proposal.
2. A description of the history, experience, and qualifications of your firm and any proposed subcontractors you plan to use to perform the *Scope of Work*. This should include:
  - a. An outline of the structure of your firm including details about key personnel and how many people are on staff.
  - b. The lead account manager's name, experience, role within your organization and other accounts this person will be handling.
  - c. All specific support staff assigned to the project;
  - d. Resumes for all principals and staff assigned to the CSD project
3. Note any experience, clients, and samples of the work your firm has done with special interest groups such as the Deaf, or disabled including results achieved.
4. At least 3 references from similar projects your firm has undertaken.
5. Rationale for why CSD should choose your firm.
6. Two of your firm's greatest strengths that clearly align with CSD's goals.
7. One idea you would implement for our company right away.
8. Any proposed public relations activities you envision to get the CSD story national press.
9. An assessment of how much time you would allocate to work on our account.
10. A specific outline of the reporting and communication system you plan to use in working with our staff to ensure a responsive, productive, successful relationship. Please elaborate with specifics.

## **APPROACH TO SCOPE OF WORK**

Provide a detailed description of your approach to each *Scope of Work* element.

## **SERVICE TIMETABLES**

Beginning at the date of hire outline a detailed timetable with description of the services to be performed by the firm. Include the estimated time required to complete the work with specific benchmarks that will measure the success of your firm's efforts.

## **ESTIMATED COST**

Provide a fee structure based on a monthly retainer with specific projected added expenses.

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Prospective service providers should submit their proposal on, or before **April 1, 2017**.

Proposals should be titled "PR RFP," and submitted via email to:

Brandi Rarus,

Vice President Public Relations & Community Engagement

Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD)

[BRARUS@CSD.ORG](mailto:BRARUS@CSD.ORG)

Should you need additional information, please contact Brandi at [brarus@csd.org](mailto:brarus@csd.org)

We expect a final decision to be made by April 15, 2017.

## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications and range of experience of firm's staff and subcontractors.
2. Written proposal presented by firm demonstrating a clear understanding of the unique needs and requirements of CSD as outlined in this document under "*Scope of Work.*"
3. Knowledge of project requirements clearly explained in firm's proposal under "*Approach to Scope of Work.*"
5. Project Costs

Vendors not awarded the work outlined here will be notified by email. The successful vendor will be required to sign a contract with CSD in which they accept responsibility for the performance of services as stated in their proposal. After review of the submissions, CSD may request to meet with potential service providers prior to selecting a vendor.

## **PROVISIONS**

**Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD)** assumes no responsibility and no liability for costs incurred relevant to the preparation and submission of the RFP by prospective vendors, or any other costs prior to issuance of a contract.

A contract between **Communication Service for the Deaf (CSD)** and the selected firm will be subject to, and be in accordance with all Federal, State, and local laws as may be applicable.