



County of Allegheny

RICH FITZGERALD
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION OF PURCHASING AND SUPPLIES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

FOR

PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM: SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION AND STIGMA REDUCTION COMMUNICATIONS

SPECIFICATION NO. 8451

This Request for Proposal contains requirements for proposers to assist the County in meeting M/W/DBE goals and our Veteran owned small business goals. Therefore, proposers must document their plan or good faith efforts to meet those goals. Please see the Requirements and fill out the Participation Statement.

RFP DUE DATE: Thursday, December 31, 2020, 11:30 A.M., E.T.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL: All proposals must be submitted electronically. No proposals shall be accepted in person, by U.S. Mail, by private courier service, via oral or email communication, telephone or fax transmission.

PERIOD OF CONTRACT: February 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

Erica Brandon
Purchasing Agent
412-350-6179

Erica.Brandon@AlleghenyCounty.us

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

RFP NUMBER: 8451

TITLE: RFP for PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM: SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION AND STIGMA REDUCTION COMMUNICATIONS

DUE DATE: Thursday, December 31, 2020

ADVERTISING DATE: Friday, November 20, 2020

DESCRIPTION: Proposal to provide PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM: SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION AND STIGMA REDUCTION COMMUNICATIONS to the County of Allegheny

The undersigned hereby offers to furnish and deliver the articles or services as specified in strict accordance with the RFP and scope of proposal, all of which are made a part of this request. This offer is not subject to withdrawal without permission of the County of Allegheny Chief Purchasing Officer.

FULL LEGAL COMPANY NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE AND ZIP CODE: _____

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: _____

PRINT NAME: _____

TITLE OF AUTHORIZED SIGNER: _____

TELEPHONE #: _____

FAX #: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

COMPANY INFORMATION

(This information is for tracking purposes only and has no role in the determination of the lowest, responsive, responsible proposer.)

check here if your firm is registered with the Allegheny County Department of Equity and Inclusion

check here if your firm is a "Minority Business Enterprise" or "MBE" as defined in the Small Business Act, 15 USC

check here if your firm is a "Women Business Enterprise" or "WBE" as defined in the Small Business Act, 15 USC

check here if your firm is a "Small Business" as defined by the Small Business Administration (13 C.F.R. 121.201, in most cases, this means a business with 500 or fewer employees)

NOTE: A COPY OF THIS PAGE FULLY COMPLETED MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH YOUR PROPOSAL.

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1. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO SUPPLIERS

1.1 Purpose of Request for Proposals

The purpose of this document is to provide interested parties with information to enable them to prepare and submit a proposal for the provision of **PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM: SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION AND STIGMA REDUCTION COMMUNICATIONS** (the “RFP”) to the County of Allegheny, (the “County”). The County as represented by its Division of Purchasing and Supplies, intends to use the results of this process to award a contract to one or possibly more successful suppliers.

1.2 About this Document

This document is a Request for Proposal, otherwise referred to as RFP. It differs from an invitation for bid in that the County is seeking a solution, not a quotation meeting firm specifications for the lowest price. As such, the lowest price proposal shall not guarantee an award recommendation. The electronically received proposals shall be evaluated based upon criteria formulated around the most important features of a product or service, of which quality, testing, references, experience in the field, availability or capability may be overriding factors. Price may not be determinative in the issuance of a contract award. The proposal evaluation criteria should be viewed as a standard that measures how well a supplier’s proposal meets the desired requirements and needs of the County. The criteria considered in evaluating the award are set forth in this document.

The County shall thoroughly review all proposals received. The County shall also utilize its best judgment when determining which suppliers to schedule meetings with after receipt of all proposals. The request for proposal process allows the County to negotiate with suppliers prior to awarding a contract. A contract shall be awarded to a qualified responsible supplier(s) submitting the best proposal. The County reserves the right to select, and subsequently recommend for an award, the proposed service which best meets its required needs, quality levels, and budget constraints.

The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to enter into contract for any services or equipment.

1.3 Terminology

“**Agreement**” means the negotiated contract between the County and the Contractor to provide the Contract Services or Contract Items.

“**County**” identifies the County of Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

“**Proposer**” or “**Supplier**” means the person, firm, or corporation that submits a proposal to the Court and County, in response to the RFP, seeking to be selected as the Contractor.

“**Contractor**” means the entity selected by the County to perform the Contract Services or provide the Contract Items.

“**Contract Services**” means the services provided under the Scope of Contract as set forth in Section 2 of the RFP and as finalized, through negotiations, and incorporated into the Agreement.

“**Contract Items**” means the goods provided under the Scope of Contract as set forth in Section 2 of the RFP and as finalized, through negotiations, and incorporated into the Agreement.

1.4 Issuing Office

This RFP is issued for the County by the Division of Purchasing and Supplies (Issuing Office). The Issuing Office is the sole point of contact in the County for this RFP. Please refer all inquiries in writing to.

Point-of-Contact:
Erica Brandon, Purchasing Agent
Erica.Brandon@AlleghenyCounty.US
Phone 412-350-6179, Fax 412-350-5883

It is proposed that if a contract is entered into as a result of this RFP, it shall be a fixed price contract, unless otherwise stated, on a list of products or services and / or a percentage discount from catalog list price for list of manufacturers covered by the contract. The contract shall incorporate by reference this RFP and the General Conditions and Instruction to Suppliers.

Proposers who have received the RFP from a source other than through Bonfire central notification are advised to contact the point-of-contact above to provide their company's contact information. Proposers who have received the RFP by any method are responsible for checking the website to obtain any addenda.

1.5 Proposal Delivery, Time, Date and Place

Separate and sealed Proposals will be received electronically until **11:30 A.M., E.T., Thursday, December 31, 2020** for **PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM: SUBSTANCE USE HARM REDUCTION AND STIGMA REDUCTION COMMUNICATIONS**.

The County reserves the right to extend or postpone the date and time for accepting proposals through an addendum.

All proposals, responses, inquiries, or correspondence relating to or in reference to this RFP, and all electronic media, reports, charts, and other documentation submitted by supplier shall become the property of the County when received. Nothing submitted shall be considered confidential or proprietary.

1.6 Proposal Submissions

Proposers are required to submit their Proposals electronically via <https://alleghenycounty.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities>. No Proposals shall be accepted in person, by U.S. Mail, by private courier service, via oral or e-mail communication, telephone or fax transmission.

Proposals must be submitted in the format described in this RFP. To be considered, the proposal must respond to all requirements in the RFP. The contents of this RFP and your proposal shall become part of any contract(s) entered into as a result of this RFP.

The County reserves the right to request additional information which, in the County's opinion, is necessary to assure that the proposer's competence, business organization, and financial resources are adequate to perform in accordance with this RFP and any resultant contract.

The County may make such investigation as it sees fit to determine the ability of the proposer to perform the work, and the proposer shall furnish the County all such information and data for this purpose as requested by the County. The County reserves the right to reject any proposal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such proposer fails to satisfy the County that such proposer is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract and to satisfactorily perform the work specified.

When asked, proposers shall also include their answers to the questions listed in this RFP using the same answering sequence as put forth in the RFP.

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the proposer's ability to meet the requirements of the RFP.

Any other information thought to be relevant, but not applicable to the enumerated questions, should be provided as an appendix to the proposal.

1.7 Clarification of Requirements & General Questions

It is the intent and purpose of the County that this RFP permit competitive proposals. It shall be the supplier's responsibility to advise the point-of-contact if any language, requirements, or any combination thereof, inadvertently restricts or limits the requirements stated in this RFP to a single source. Such notifications and general questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted electronically via the Bonfire system <https://alleghenycounty.bonfirehub.com/portal/?tab=openOpportunities> and must be received no later than seven (7) days prior to the date and time noted above. A review of such notification and questions will be made and a timely response will be posted on the Bonfire site.

1.8 Addenda, Clarification and Modifications

Any changes, additions, deletions, or clarifications to the RFP are made by amendments (addenda). All addenda will be posted by the County on the Bonfire system and it will be the responsibility of the proposer to access the addenda. Any supplier in doubt as to the true meaning of any part of the RFP documents may request any interpretation thereof from the Issuing Office. At the request of the supplier, or in the event the Issuing Office deems the interpretation to be substantive, the interpretation shall be made by written addendum issued by the Issuing Office. Such addendum issued by the Issuing Office shall become part of the proposal package having the same binding effect as provisions of the original RFP. No verbal explanations or interpretations shall be binding. In order to have a request for interpretation considered, the request must be submitted in writing and must be received by the Issuing Office no later than seven (7) days prior to the proposal closing date.

All addenda, amendments, and interpretations of this solicitation shall be in writing. Any amendment or interpretation that is not in writing shall not legally bind the County. Only information supplied by the County in writing or in this RFP should be used in preparing proposal responses. All contact that a supplier may have had before or shall have after receipt of this RFP with any individuals, employees, or representatives of the County and any information that may have been read in any news media or seen or heard in any communications facility regarding this RFP should be disregarded in preparing responses.

The County does not assume responsibility for the receipt of any addendum posted on Bonfire or sent directly to suppliers. All addenda issued must be signed via Bonfire along with the proposal.

1.9 Examination of Documents and Requirements

Proposers shall carefully examine all RFP documents and thoroughly familiarize themselves with all requirements prior to submitting a proposal to ensure that the proposal meets the intent of this RFP.

Before submitting a proposal, each proposer shall be responsible for making all investigations and examinations that are necessary to ascertain conditions and requirements effecting the requirements of this RFP. Failure to make such investigations and examinations shall not relieve the supplier from an obligation to comply, in every detail, with all provisions and requirements of the RFP.

1.10 Minority, Women or Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (M/W/DBE) Requirements.

M/W/DBE's shall receive equal opportunities to submit proposals and shall not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, sex, disability, or national origin in consideration of an award.

A MWDBE is defined as a small business concern which is at least 51% owned and controlled by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, or in the case of any publicly owned business, at least 51% of the stock of which is owned by one or more socially and economically disadvantaged individuals. Socially and economically disadvantaged include Women, Black Americans, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, Asian-Pacific Americans, and subcontinent Asian Americans.

A listing of MWDBE's certified by the County and the Pennsylvania Unified Certification Program can be found at <https://www.alleghenycounty.us/equity-inclusion/certified-firms.aspx>

1.11 Veteran Owned Small Business Requirements

Allegheny County has an annual goal of not less than five (5) percent participation by veteran-owned small businesses in all contracts. The participation goal shall apply to the overall dollar amount expended with respect to contracts. The County, therefore, requires that all prospective Contractors demonstrate good faith efforts to obtain the participation of veteran-owned small businesses in work to be performed under County contracts. In order to demonstrate this good faith commitment, all prospective Contractors are required to complete and submit with their proposals an MBE/WBE/Veteran Owned Solicitation and Commitment Form, which details the efforts made by the prospective Contractor to obtain such participation. Failure to submit an MBE/WBE/Veteran Owned Solicitation and Commitment Form will result in rejection of the proposal.

- A. Veteran-owned small business is defined by the County as a business having one hundred (100) or fewer full-time employees and not less than fifty-one (51) percent of which is owned by one (1) or more veterans, or in the case of any publicly owned business, not less than fifty-one (51) percent of the stock of which is owned by one (1) or more veterans, and the management and daily business operations of which are controlled by one (1) or more veterans. Vendor **MUST** provide proof of veteran ownership including percentage & name and address of business.
- B. For contracts under one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000.00), veteran-owned small businesses shall be exempt from all bonding requirements.
- C. THE ATTACHED FORMS (VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION STATEMENT AND VETERAN OWNED SMALL BUSINESS-WAIVER REQUEST) MUST BE COMPLETED AND SUBMITTED WITH ALL PROPOSALS. FAILURE TO SUBMIT THESE DOCUMENTS MAY RESULT IN THE REJECTION OF YOUR PROPOSAL.
- D. Attach a copy of vendor(s) DD 214 discharge form to participation statement.

1.12 Conflict of Interest

The proposer shall not accept gifts or anything of value nor enter into any business arrangement with any employee, official or agent of the County.

By signing their proposal, the proposer certifies and represents to the County that the proposer has not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment,

advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

1.13 Proposal Preparation Costs

Issuance of this RFP does not commit the County, in any way, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal. The issuance of this RFP does not obligate the County to contract for any services or equipment. All costs related to the preparation and submission of a proposal shall be paid by the proposer.

1.14 Insurance

The supplier shall obtain and maintain during the life of the Contract, with an insurance supplier rated not less than A-by A.M. Best, authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the following insurance requirements:

Automobile Liability. Bodily injury and property damage liability covering all non-owned and hired automobiles for limits of not less than \$1,000,000 bodily injury each person, each accident and \$1,000,000 property damage, or \$1,000,000 combined single limit - bodily injury and property damage. Bodily injury and property damage liability covering all owned automobiles for limits of not less than \$300,000 bodily injury each person, each accident and \$300,000 property damage, or \$300,000 combined single limit – bodily injury and property damage.

Commercial General Liability. Bodily injury and property damage liability as shall protect the Supplier and any subcontractor performing work under the Contract, from claims of bodily injury or property damage which arise from operation of the Contract, whether such operations are performed by the supplier, any subcontractor, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by either. The amounts of such insurance shall not be less than \$1,000,000 bodily injury each occurrence/aggregate and \$1,000,000 property damage each occurrence/aggregate, or \$1,000,000 bodily injury and property damage combined single limits each occurrence/aggregate. This insurance shall include coverage for products, operations, personal injury liability and contractual liability, assumed under the indemnity provision of the Contract.

Professional Liability. (Required for Professional Services Only) Coverage as shall protect the Supplier and any subcontractor performing work under the Contract, from claims errors and omissions which arise from operation of the Contract, whether such operations are performed by the Supplier, any subcontractor, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by either. The amounts of such insurance shall not be less than \$1,000,000 each occurrence/aggregate and \$1,000,000 excess liability, each occurrence/aggregate.

Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability. The supplier shall meet the statutory requirements of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, \$100,000 per accident limit, \$500,000 disease per policy limit, \$100,000 disease each employee limit.

Proof of Insurance. The supplier shall not commence any work in connection with the Contract until it has obtained all of the foregoing types of insurance and proof of such insurance has been approved by County. The supplier shall not allow any subcontractor to commence work on its subcontract until all similar insurance required of the subcontractor has been obtained and approved.

Deductibles. The County shall be exempt from, and in no way liable for any sums of money, which may represent a deductible in any insurance policy. The payment of such deductible shall be the sole responsibility of the supplier and/or subcontractor providing such insurance.

Additional Insured. Allegheny County shall be named as an additional insured for operations or services rendered under the general liability coverage. The supplier's insurance shall be primary of any self-funding and/or insurance

otherwise carried by the County for all loss or damages arising from the supplier operations under this agreement. Certificates of such insurance will be furnished to the County and shall contain the provision that the County be given thirty (30) days written notice of any intent to amend or terminate by either the insured or the insuring supplier.

Documents. Should any or all of the required insurance coverage be self-funded/self-insured, a copy of the Certificate of Self-Insurance or other documentation from the County Department of Insurance shall be furnished. If any part of the work under the Contract is sublet, the subcontractor shall be required to meet all insurance requirements set forth in the Contract, provided that types and amounts of insurance to be maintained by each subcontractor shall be adjusted to an amount reasonably necessary to cover the risks associated with such subcontractor's role in the project. The parties stipulate that the supplier shall maintain each type of insurance set forth above at a coverage level equal to at least half of the amount set forth above for such type of insurance. However, nothing contained herein shall relieve the supplier from meeting all insurance requirements or otherwise being responsible for the subcontractor.

No program of self-insurance shall apply to any of the foregoing coverages without prior approval of the County.

The successful proposer shall be responsible to require his sub-contractors to comply with all of the insurance requirements of this agreement.

The Chief Purchasing Officer may waive or modify any of the insurance requirements at his discretion.

1.15 Option to Extend

The Division of Purchasing and Supplies, reserves the right, upon notice to the supplier, to extend the Agreement or any part of the Agreement for up to three (3) months, upon the same terms and conditions after the indicated expiration date as described in the Agreement. This shall be utilized to prevent a lapse in Agreement coverage for the goods or services indicated on the Agreement, and only for the time necessary to enter into a new Agreement. When applicable, an extension notice shall be issued defining the exact extension of the Agreement; all other terms and conditions of the extended Agreement shall remain in full force and effect.

1.16 Right to Terminate

The county retains the right to terminate any contract(s) resulting from this solicitation upon thirty (30) days written notice.

2. SCOPE OF CONTRACT

2.1 Background

Since 2008, Allegheny County, a county of 130 municipalities including the City of Pittsburgh and 1.2 million residents, has experienced fatal overdose rates higher than those seen throughout much of the country. Data on fatal overdose received from the Allegheny County Office of the Medical Examiner and analyzed by the Allegheny County Health Department and Department of Human Services reflect 3,180 fatal drug overdoses in Allegheny County between 2014 and 2019 – 89% of the overdose deaths were opioid-related.

Data-driven response efforts must continue to identify priority geographic locations and populations most at risk to direct prevention response efforts. The rapid increase of overdose deaths starting in 2015 is largely attributed to the presence of the synthetic drug fentanyl, which has been used to supplement heroin and other illicit drugs. The opioid overdose epidemic and additional polysubstance use have also contributed to increases in non-fatal overdoses, emergency room visits, widespread outbreaks of infectious diseases linked to intravenous drug use, and unintended community-level consequences.^{i,iii,iii} The complex and changing nature of the drug overdose epidemic in Allegheny County, including unknowns around the illicit drug supply and its impact on residents, requires an interdisciplinary, comprehensive, and cohesive public health approach that uses both local surveillance and strategic communications to drive prevention efforts.

While accidental overdose deaths in Allegheny County dropped 33% from 2017 (738) to 2018 (492), there are still far too many people dying from overdose, with 570 lives lost to overdose in 2019. Accidental drug overdose deaths increased by 15.8% from 2018 to 2019 and while 2020 numbers are still preliminary, there have been 311 deaths in Q1 and Q2 of 2020 as of data received through June 2020. There was an 83% increase in the number of accidental drug overdose deaths from Q2 2019 to Q3 2019. Following this increase, there have been four quarters with concerning high numbers of overdose deaths (Q3 2019, Q4 2020, Q1 2020, and Q2 2020).

Recent data show that black residents are dying from drug overdoses at higher rates than white residents. The death rate per 100,00 for black residents has increased since Q3 2019, and in Q1 and Q2 of 2020, the death rate per 100,00 for black residents is at least two times the death rate for white residents. Cocaine is more likely to contribute to the death of black residents, while heroin contributes more to deaths of white residents. Overall, most accidental drug overdose deaths involve multiple substances. Since 2018, the percentage of deaths involving heroin and fentanyl has decreased, while the percentage of deaths implicating both cocaine and fentanyl as well as both methamphetamine and fentanyl has increased.

Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has presented numerous challenges that have had an impact on those with substance use disorder. Emotional stressors such as potential job loss, working full-time from home without child care and a decrease in face-to-face social interaction has made it even more challenging for people to seek treatment or access treatment or recovery support when they want or need it. The pandemic has underscored the necessity for local organizations to continue to respond to the needs of people with substance use disorder or individuals at risk for overdose and highlighted the importance of developing a data-driven, community-based communications campaign to reach priority populations.

In 2019, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Overdose Data to Action Program awarded funds to the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) to reduce overdose in Allegheny County. As a result of this CDC award, ACHD's Overdose Prevention Program (OPP) is announcing the availability of up to \$550,000 to a public relations firm over a 2-year time period to develop and implement harm reduction and stigma reduction messaging. The communications campaign shall feature messaging on important topics including, but not limited to, the nature of substances (licit and illicit) commonly used in Allegheny County; the widespread presence of fentanyl in the region's illicit drug supply; the benefits of harm reduction strategies; stigma reduction surrounding substance use,

treatment, naloxone, and address emerging needs identified during focus groups. The campaign will include the development of public facing materials and the creation of an Allegheny County Substance Use Resource and Data website encompassing the campaign and Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) data, including consultation for strategic planning, website development and hosting.

2.2 General Requirements

The County is seeking a proposer(s) to:

- Develop and implement a communications campaign across multiple print and digital channels to raise awareness of the nature of substances and their associated risks, increase awareness of harm reduction strategies, and reduce stigma associated with substance use, treatment, and naloxone.
- Coordinate focus groups with local harm reduction and community organizations, including persons who use drugs and persons in recovery, that will help shape and craft key messaging and collaborate with the program evaluators to develop baseline and follow-up campaign metrics for implementation.
- Build out campaign to include messaging regarding medications for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and person-centered recovery.
- Design website to support Allegheny County Substance Use Resource and Data and Overdose Data to Action (OD2A) data.
- Create social media content to support campaign messaging.

In addition to requirements above, the selected PR Firm will be required to:

- Participate in ACHD Overdose Prevention Program (OPP) evaluation activities including, but not limited to, developing baseline and follow-up campaign metrics with ACHD's evaluation contractor (Pitt Evaluation Institute for Public Health), responding to qualitative and quantitative data requests and providing other evaluation-relevant information.
- Provide monthly report to ACHD OPP liaison recapping progress towards goals (due by the 30th of every month).
- Participate in Overdose Data to Action biannual partner convenings.
- Check-in with the ACHD OPP Public Relations Coordinator as necessary to share status updates on progress towards goals and participate in bi-monthly meetings with the OPP team.

ACHD's Overdose Prevention Program may negotiate the budget and retains the right to adjust budget requests. Additionally, the program retains the right to fund through the list of eligible applicants if additional funding becomes available.

2.3 Scope of Work – General

Applicants should propose communication strategies that provide individuals with the resources and insight they need to make informed choices around substance use. Communications will be expected to address substance use disorder disparities and/or behavioral health disparities and be responsive to local strengths and concerns as identified in initial focus groups. The approach should demonstrate specific consideration of population(s) of highest risk (e.g. people currently or previously involved in the justice system, those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences), as well as populations that have been historically underserved (e.g. racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ persons, people who are experiencing homelessness). All messaging must be approved by ACHD prior to implementation.

Strategies and Activities

ACHD encourages applicants to propose strategies and approaches that align with the spirit and scope of work but remain innovative in messaging to reach priority communities and target populations impacted by substance use and drug-related harms. An example of activities include, but are not limited to:

- Addressing stigma surrounding substance use, overdose, help seeking/treatment, and naloxone among the public, healthcare providers, public safety professionals, emergency medical service professionals, and others
- Messaging about the nature of substances commonly used in Allegheny County (licit and illicit) and appropriate harm reduction strategies to reduce morbidity and mortality, including messaging for those who use illicit drugs about fentanyl in the drug supply
- Partnering with and appropriately compensating harm reduction organizations, persons who use drugs (PWUD), and persons in recovery to develop and implement communications based on the best available research evidence
- Conduct focus groups with local harm reduction and community-based organizations, persons who use drugs, and persons in recovery from addiction to craft key messaging for all platforms, with appropriate compensation for all involved
- Risk reduction messaging for vulnerable populations such as pregnant women and justice-involved persons
- Communications around the multiple pathways to recovery and the role of harm reduction and medication in person-centered recovery for persons who use drugs
- Messaging about medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and stigma reduction around MOUD (Note: MOUD is commonly referred to as Medication-Assisted Treatment or “MAT”)
- Evaluation efforts should include the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, including data on reach and impact of efforts, as well as contextual evidence and experiential evidence from people using substances, families, and practice professionals

Outcomes

Recipients are expected to develop and implement communication strategies that will impact short and intermediate outcomes, along with the CDC’s Overdose Data to Action program’s long-term outcomes:

Short Term

- Increased public awareness and knowledge of the nature and extent of stigma surrounding substance use and its impacts on individuals, families, and communities
- Increased awareness of the risks of licit and illicit drugs
- Increased awareness of harm reduction behaviors among people who use drugs
- Increased awareness of the role of stigma preventing individuals from seeking harm reduction services or treatment for substance use

Intermediate

- Increased harm reduction behaviors among people at risk of overdose
- Decreased stigma associated with substance use

Long Term

- Decreased drug overdose death rate, including prescription opioid and illicit opioid overdose death rates
- Decreased rate of opioid misuse and opioid use disorder
- Increased provision of evidence-based treatment for opioid use disorder
- Decreased rate of emergency department visits due to misuse or opioid use disorder

Supplier Response Format

Applicants should respond to this RFP with the following (100 points):

- Clear and concise summary of the organization and organizational capacity to implement the approach.
(10 points)
 - Detail experience working in public health, harm reduction, substance use, or addiction fields.
 - Include relevant organizational information or supporting content related to the RFP Scope of Work.
- Clear and concise summary of the strategies and associated activities regarding harm reduction and stigma reduction communications for the proposed project.
(20 points)
 - Utilize data to inform proposal of strategies and activities and identification of priority populations for communications. To access this data, go to dashboard: <http://bit.ly/ACHD-Overdose>
 - Fatal Overdose data
 - Emergency Department Opioid Overdose-Related Visit data
 - Naloxone EMS Administration data
 - Detail organizational experience with messaging to priority populations, such as those at higher risk of overdose (e.g. people currently or previously involved in the justice system, those who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences), as well as populations that have been historically underserved (e.g. racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ persons, people who are experiencing homelessness).
- Detailed communications plan and timeline that includes sample harm reduction and stigma reduction messaging via variety of communications channels, including print, digital and social media.
(30 points)
 - Please refer to this link for harm reduction and risk education definitions: <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>
 - Please refer to the deliverables within the work plan objectives outlined.
 - Provide a draft media relations plan including specific goals for media relations, such as who, what, where, when, why, and how over the provided timeframe.
- Portfolio of previous communications plans and messaging.
(20 points)
 - Include metrics and data that show the campaign’s effectiveness of reaching target audiences.
 - Include analysis of areas of improvement.
- Summary of prior website design and building (if applicable).
(10 points)
- Detailed explanation of previous experience with community organizations and focus groups in campaign development and implementation.
(10 points)
 - Be specific as to how your organization has organized and conducted prior focus groups and how findings led to crafting key messaging.

3. PRICE

Suppliers shall submit their pricing via the following format:

Please see project budget period and funding period information in General Requirements, section 2.2. Applicants should provide the following two elements as part of the price submission: summary budget and detailed line item budget with narrative justification.

1. Summary budget:

Year 1 summary budget:

YEAR 1: Not to exceed \$300,000	
	<u>Request</u>
Personnel	
Fringe Benefits	
Consultants	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Travel	
Other	
Indirect (if necessary)	
Total Project Costs	

Year 2 summary budget:

YEAR 2: Not to exceed \$250,000	
	<u>Request</u>
Personnel	
Fringe Benefits	
Consultants	
Equipment	
Supplies	
Travel	
Other	
Indirect (if necessary)	
Total Project Costs	

2. Year 1 Itemized Line Item Budget and Justification Narrative

Budget Line Item	Itemized		Amount Requested
A. Personnel			
Position title (<i>fill in</i>)	Salary	Effort	\$
Total Personnel salaries			\$
B. Fringe Benefits	Calculated at x%		\$
C. Consultants	Itemized		\$
D. Equipment	Itemized		\$
E. Supplies	Itemized		\$
F. Travel	Itemized		\$
G. Other	Itemized		\$
H. Indirect (if necessary)	Provide federally negotiated rate with date		\$
Total			\$

Budget Justification Narrative (Include a budget narrative to explain each line-item, A-G, and how the amounts were derived.):

Personnel: List all staff positions by title (both current and proposed). Give the annual salary or hourly rate of each position, the percentage of each position’s time devoted to the project, and the activities you anticipate these staff persons to conduct.

Fringe Benefits: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, etc.

Travel: Specify the purpose and details of the travel.

Supplies: Identify supplies in the detailed budget and the intended use for these supplies (i.e. what activities will the supplies support).

Contractual: Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. Please note that activities intended to extensively collaborate with harm reduction organizations, community-based organizations, people who use drugs, and people in recovery from addiction should build these into contractual costs or elsewhere when appropriate.

Other direct costs: these will vary depending on the nature of the project. This may include activities, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

Indirect charge: Indicate how the rate is applied.

Please note the following unallowable costs and activities when developing budgets, which have been determined by the funding source (CDC Overdose Data to Action):

- Prohibited purchases: Naloxone/Narcan, syringes, fentanyl test strips, furniture or equipment.
- HIV/HCV/other STD/STI testing.
- Drug disposal. This includes Implementing or expanding drug disposal programs or drug take back programs, drug drop box, drug disposal bags.
- The provision of medical/clinical care.

- Wastewater analysis, including testing vendors, sewage testing and wastewater testing.
- Research.
- Direct funding for the provision of substance use disorder treatment.
- The primary prevention of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as a standalone activity.

4. EVALUATION CRITERIA

4.1 Evaluation Process

All proposals are subject to be evaluated by the point-of-contact, the Chief Purchasing Officer or an evaluation committee made up of County department representatives and/or an independent consultant.

The County uses the concept of “Best Value” in evaluating proposals. “Best Value” means the overall combination of quality, price and various elements of required services that in total are optimal relative to the County’s needs and most advantageous.

4.2 Additional Information

Suppliers to this RFP may be required to submit additional information that the County may deem necessary to further evaluate the supplier’s qualifications.

4.3 Award Criteria I

Suppliers are not to inflate prices in the initial proposal as cost is one of the factors in determining who may receive an award or be invited to formal negotiations.

Each proposal shall be evaluated by a Selection Committee, appointed by the County Manager. The Committee shall use the following criteria to determine which vendor is capable of implementing the requirements outlined in the RFP. However, the Committee, in its sole discretion, may use other criteria to make its decision and is not limited to the items listed above in the **Supplier Response Format** section above.

As stated above, respondents may be required to provide an oral presentation, followed by a question and answer session. The number of finalists to be selected for an oral presentation has not been determined; however, the number is not expected to exceed three. Any such presentations shall be at no cost to the County.

In addition, selection of the administrator shall be conditioned upon a site visit by up to three members of the selection committee, to be conducted at a mutually agreed date and time. All expenses incurred by the members of the selection committee for this site visit shall be borne entirely by the administrator and shall be considered a cost of responding to the RFP.

It is the County’s expectation that upon successful conclusion of contract negotiations, that the selected administrator shall implement the transition work plan outlined in their response to this RFP for an effective date of February 1, 2021.

The County reserves the right to award in part, to reject any and all proposals in whole or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities and omissions if, in its judgment, the best interests of the County shall not be served.

4.4 Final Award Process

A shortlist of proposers may be determined. These short-listed proposers may be scheduled for a structured oral presentation or interview. Any such presentations shall be at no cost to the County. The County also reserves the right to visit the proposer’s facilities, offices and warehouses. The oral interview may be recorded or videotaped. At the end of the oral presentation/interview process, the evaluation of the respondents shall be completed. At this time the supplier(s) deemed most advantageous to the County shall be chosen.

5. TERMS OF CONTRACT

5.1 Period of Contract

The period of contract shall be for February 1, 2021 through August 31, 2022.

The County retains the right to terminate any resulting contract upon thirty (30) days written notice.

ⁱ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2013). The DAWN report: Highlights of the 2011 Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) findings on drug-related emergency department visits. Available at <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/2k13/dawn127/sr127-dawn-highlights.htm>

ⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017). Increase in hepatitis C infections linked to worsening opioid crisis. Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom/2017/hepatitis-c-and-opioid-injection-pressrelease.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ Frank, R. G. (2017). Ending Medicaid expansion will leave people struggling with addiction without care. The Hill. Available at <http://thehill.com/blogs/pundits-blog/healthcare/338579-endingmedicaid-expansion-will-leave-people-struggling-with>