

**ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE PURCHASING AGENT**

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS NO. 23-AED-RFP-441**

**ADDENDUM NO. 1**

Arlington County Request for Proposals No. 23-AED-RFP-441 for Destination Marketing and Communication Services for the Arlington Convention and Visitors Service is amended as follows:

**I. ADD PARAGRAPH G. TO SECTION V.7. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL ELEMENTS, AS FOLLOWS:**

**G. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS**

The following requirements are mandatory. If the County concludes after its initial review of a submitted proposal that the Mandatory Requirements are not met, the proposal will be considered non-responsive and will not be evaluated further.

The Offeror may not take exceptions to mandatory provisions of the draft Contract Terms and Conditions that are attached to this solicitation. Mandatory provisions are marked with an asterisk.

*Compliance with this mandatory requirement will be verified against the Offeror's exceptions, if any, to the County's draft Terms and Conditions.*

**II. RESPOND TO ALL QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY THE SOLICITATION DEADLINE:**

**Question 1: Noting the County's preferred Net-45 terms, is the expectation that the selected vendor would be able to bill for media costs as soon as the plan was approved allowing us 45 days to receive media costs before signing final insertion orders or is the expectation that the selected vendor would bill after proof of placement thus floating the media costs for several months on the County's behalf?**

**Answer 1:** The County will plan to approve short-term advertising purchases in early 2023, as well as a comprehensive media plan that runs through June 2024. In both cases, subject to County review and approval, the Contractor will place media buys and sign media vendor insertion orders. Upon providing proof of placement/delivery and associated invoice(s), the Contractor will be paid by the County. The Contractor must be able to arrange adequate financing to pay vendors, production costs, media placement and related expenses in advance.

**Question 2: When does Fuse Ideas' contract end? Will there be a mandatory RFP for the creative business when that happens?**

**Answer 2:** Not applicable.

**Question 3: How satisfied are you with the current relationship you have with Fuse Ideas? Do you think Fuse Ideas is capable of handling the scope that is outlined in this RFP? If not, why?**

**Answer 3:** Not Applicable.

**Question 4: We know that you currently have limited paid media in market however, historically, have you ever had a relationship with a paid media agency?**

**Answer 4:** Yes.

**Question 5: How did this RFP come to fruition? Are formal RFPs mandated before work can be awarded?**

**Answer 5:** The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Tourism Recovery Program follows Federal guidelines and requires a formal procurement process for this type of purchase, using either sealed bids or proposals.

**Question 6: How did you hear about OBP Agency? Why did you invite us to participate? How did this RFP come to fruition? Are formal RFPs mandated before work can be awarded? We know that you currently have limited paid media in market however, historically, have you ever had a relationship with a paid media agency? How satisfied are you with the current relationship you have with Fuse Ideas? Do you think Fuse Ideas is capable of handling the scope that is outlined in this RFP? If not, why? When does Fuse Ideas' contract end? Will there be a mandatory RFP for the creative business when that happens?**

**Answer 6:** Not applicable.

**Question 7: Pricing - Confirming you are only looking for hourly rates at this time.**

**Answer 7:** That is correct. Offerors are only asked at this time to use the Cost Proposal Spreadsheet included in this solicitation as Attachment A to provide hourly rates. For each specific task under the resulting contract, the County will issue a request for a quote with a Scope of Services. The Contractor shall then submit a cost proposal, including reimbursable expenses and an estimate of hours required to complete the task in accordance with the hourly rates established in the contract. The County may negotiate scope, hours, and reimbursable expenses for each task.

**Question 8: The RFP states proposals must be signed but also submitted electronically. Confirming electronic signatures are acceptable.**

**Answer 8:** Electronic signatures are acceptable.

**Question 9: On a scale of 1-5 (5 being most aggressive), rate your desire to find a partner that will push you creatively?**

**Answer 9:** Without providing a rating, we seek to collaborate with a partner that demonstrates rich expertise and application of destination industry best practices.

**Question 10: On a scale of 1-5 (5 being most aggressive), rate your desire to find a partner that will push you strategically.**

**Answer 10:** Please see Answer 9.

**Question 11: Market Research - What existing research do you have? Where are the gaps that**

**need to be filled?**

**Answer 11:** We have custom research that is dated – completed pre-pandemic. Additionally, we have state and regional research that is more current. We intend to work with the Contractor to define research gaps and prioritize potential projects for outsourced partners.

**Question 12: Can you define your current team that will work on this project. Outsourced partners, in-house capabilities, etc.**

**Answer 12:** Key team members for this project are our Arlington Convention and Visitors Service (ACVS) Marketing Manager and Director. ACVS's full internal team is comprised of marketing, sales, visitor services and public relations professionals. Additionally, ACVS has access to an in-house graphic designer. ACVS also has an external creative design agency under contract working on Brand & Messaging, Creative Campaign Design & Implementation, and development of a Digital Asset Plan for photography and video. Lastly, ACVS has a separate agency under contract working on a Website Refresh as well as managing ongoing Website Hosting and Maintenance.

**Question 13: Content development: Do you have a content strategy in place or is this part of the scope? Trying to understand if you are looking for execution or strategy or both?**

**Answer 13:** We have a preliminary content strategy; however, a task under this Scope of Services could include formalizing a fully integrated strategy.

**Question 14: Is this RFP for creative services/campaign development as well?**

**Answer 14:** This RFP is primarily focused on the areas specifically highlighted in the Scope of Services. However, the Contractor will likely be asked to take on creative design projects over the life of the contract.

**Question 15: Campaign - Is this selected partner responsible for campaign development? It sounds like you have a selected partner already (section A). If you have a creative partner, which comes first, a creative strategy or a media strategy? How do you see both partners working together? Is the budget allocation inclusive of the creative partner fees? Or do they have a different budget? Who is the creative partner?**

**Answer 15:** The Contractor will not be responsible for campaign development. ACVS has an external creative design agency under contract working on Brand & Messaging, Creative Campaign Design & Implementation, and development of a Digital Asset Plan for photography and video. The Contractor will develop and execute a media strategy based on ACVS's target markets and goals. The creative partner will develop campaign assets based on the media plan. The ACVS Marketing Manager will be the primary point-of-contact coordinating the activities of both partners. The budget for creative partner fees is separate from the budget listed in the Scope of Services for this RFP. The creative partner is Fuseideas.

**Question 16: Reporting - What type of reporting is expected? Do you have preferred tools you wish to use? How often is reporting expected?**

**Answer 16:** Based on industry best practices for each work area (marketing, digital advertising, etc.) ACVS will collaborate with the Contractor to agree upon a standard reporting method. A summary report on each major work area will be expected on a regularly scheduled monthly basis.

Specifically, regarding PR, the Contractor will work with ACVS to establish and apply a PR/communications measurement and scoring system based on the International Association for Measurement and Evaluation of Communication's (AMEC) Barcelona Principles and Destinations International's Public Relations Measurement Guidelines Handbook for Destination Organizations.

**Question 17: Audience - Do you have deeper data on your target audiences (outside of categories)? If not, do you need more data? Is this part of the Scope of Services?**

**Answer 17:** Yes, we have some deeper data outside of categories, however it is possible that once market research gaps are identified that we will seek to obtain additional data as a task under this Scope of Services.

**Question 18: Visitor spending - is this tracked through sales tax revenue? Please define how this will be measured?**

**Answer 18:** Visitor spending is measured in part by local Transient Occupancy Tax, Sales Tax, Meals Tax and taxes related to various tourism-related activities. At the state level, measures include Direct Spending, Employment, Labor Income, State Taxes and Local Taxes.

**Question 19: The RFP states the goal is to drive overnight hotel stays and associated visitor spending. What are the specific goals for overnight stays (increase to what by when)? How is this measured? By whom? And how often? Will we be given access to these reports and data for tracking and measurement?**

**Answer 19:** As COVID-19 economic recovery continues, there is not a practical way to set specific goals and timelines for overnight stays. However, as any relevant data is received, ACVS will share it with the Contractor. Regarding Contractor Key Performance Indicators (KPI), these will be focused on campaigns and marketing activities using current industry measures.

**Question 20: Page 7, 14. Is a city business license required for this RFP?**

**Answer 20:** It is the successful Offeror's responsibility to work with the Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue to obtain a business license, if required, prior to an award.

**Question 21: Are you looking for ONE business to work with to provide all of the services or are you interested in working with multiple businesses to provide services?**

**Answer 21:** The County intends to award the resultant contract to one prime Contractor.

**Question 22: When will this project commence?**

**Answer 22:** The project must commence immediately after a contract is executed/finalized, as all ARPA grant funds must be obligated by December 31, 2023 and spent no later than June 30, 2024.

**Question 23: Does company selected have to have a physical office in Virginia or the metro DC area?**

**Answer 23:** No.

**Question 24: Are you willing to consider a joint proposal from more than one agency?**

**Answer 24:** Please see Answer 21.

**Question 25: Is there an incumbent agency for this initiative?**

**Answer 25:** No.

**Question 26: Will firms from outside Virginia or the metro DC area be considered for this initiative?**

**Answer 26:** Yes.

**Question 27: Is there a budget for this initiative?**

**Answer 27:** The budget for all ARPA services, which must be allocated by December 31, 2023, and spent by June 30, 2024, is approximately \$2.5 million, including all paid media. A budget for additional services outside of the ARPA grant (for work after June 30, 2024) will be established at a later date.

The balance of the solicitation remains unchanged.

Arlington County, Virginia

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**RETURN THIS PAGE, FULLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED, WITH YOUR PROPOSAL:**

**OFFEROR ACKNOWLEDGES RECEIPT OF ADDENDUM NUMBER 1.**

**FIRM NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_