

**DON RYAN CENTER FOR INNOVATION
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)
Public Relations & Marketing Services**

PROJECT SCOPE & TIMELINE:

The Don Ryan Center for Innovation (DRCI) is soliciting proposals from professional firms to provide public relations and marketing services in order to increase the level and quality of effective communications to the public. An Agreement for 12 months is anticipated and the starting time is projected as September 1, 2017.

DRCI CONTACT:

David Nelems – CEO

dnelems@townofbluffton.com

843-540-0405

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL DEADLINE & PROCESS:

Proposals, plus samples of work products as detailed herein must be received no later than **2:00 p.m., on Tuesday, August 22, 2017**. Proposals will be reviewed by an evaluation committee from the Town of Bluffton. Questions regarding this RFP should be made in writing via email to DRCI Contact listed above no later than end of business on Thursday, August 17, 2017.

SCOPE OF SERVICES REQUESTED:

The services provided by the successful candidate/agency shall include but not be limited to:

1. Develop public relations strategies with targeted outreach for the Don Ryan Center's special projects;
2. Create targeted media list(s) for ongoing initiatives as well as special events.
3. Work as liaison with any partners, etc., to create and maintain communications and enlist their cooperation in promoting campaigns and events.
4. Draft, edit, seek approval and distribute media materials such as press releases, advisories and pitches.
5. Work with DRCI to pursue any strategic promotional partnerships.
6. Work with DRCI to create and execute a monthly email campaign to members, the general public and other special events as required.
7. Promote the annual Tech Fest event.
8. Promote the annual Golf fundraising event.
9. Connect with local and regional groups that would benefit from having senior DRCI staff speaking at their events
10. Assist with copywriting and editing of all promotional materials such as fliers, brochures, advertisements, scripts, etc., to maintain brand consistency.
11. Seek out beneficial advertising arrangements that benefit DRCI's projects.
12. Work with DRCI to enhance, expand and promote the membership aspect of the DRCI that is available to the general public.
13. Create strategies to grow membership on a monthly basis.
14. Provide strategies toward DRCI's social media channels, including monitoring, content creation, community engagement and advising on additional initiatives for effective communications.
15. Create and pitch fresh, new and unique story angles to local and regional media.
16. Schedule and coordinate media interviews, broadcast appearances, phone/radio interviews as needed.
17. Draft scripts/speaking points for key spokespeople, and help with any interview preparation as needed.
18. Provide on-site staff support at special events.

19. Act as clearinghouse for any marketing and media related inquiries, as needed.
20. Collect press hits/placements and maintain media report.
21. Attend DRCI meetings either in person and/or by phone as requested by DRCI.
22. Secure high profile speakers from throughout the region/country to provide valuable information to attendees and enhance branding/awareness of DRCI through their monthly educational sessions.
23. Pre-event publicity to encourage attendance, and event/post-event coverage to highlight the role of DRCI in providing valuable educational sessions.

QUALIFICATIONS/EXPERIENCE:

- Currently possess or be willing to obtain a Town of Bluffton Business License if contract is awarded;
- Have five (5) years of documented past, proven and positive experiences in providing the services requested;
- Provide at least three (3) references of clients for whom your firm has provided similar services; and
- Demonstrate the ability to provide the requested services.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

1. Cost-effectiveness and a demonstrated effort to be cost-conscious.
2. Proposal price.
3. Experience as related to media relations, marketing and social media management.
4. Documented prior experience in handling project(s) of similar size and scope.
5. Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines.
6. Business integrity and reputation in the industry relevant to scope of services.
7. Proven prior experience, as confirmed by references.
8. Proven skill and reputation, including timeliness and demonstrable results, as confirmed by references.
9. Meets qualifications set forth in this RFP.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

1. A biography, resume and/or background of practitioner or agency, including applicable experience, education, awards and any case studies demonstrating prior campaigns, media results or other successes.
2. Include a description of the types of services to be provided and a budget for a typical month, showing estimated number of hours and hourly billing rate, and an estimate of reimbursable costs, if any. The proposal should include an hourly cost of service and a rate based on assignments by project. Assume that the firm/individual will work a minimum of 10 hours per week pursuant to the Agreement, with additional hours as approved in advance by the City. In the event of an emergency, the consultant may be contacted at any time of day.
3. Not more than five samples of work done by the individual(s) who would be assigned to complete the work under the Agreement.
4. Identification of the method by which progress reports and performance measurements will be provided to DRCI.
5. A minimum of three references from agencies to which the firm has provided services comparable to the services identified and described in this RFP.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS:

By submitting a proposal, your firm certifies that it has full knowledge of the scope, nature, and quality of work to be performed. Submittals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a

straightforward, concise description of the respondent's ability to fulfill the requirements of the scope of work. Therefore, it is important that each submittal is complete, adheres to the format and instructions contained herein, and is submitted in the most favorable manner possible.

The submittal package shall consist of four (4), one (1) signed original and three (3) complete copies of the Respondents proposal. The submittal package along with the appropriate number of copies shall be sealed and delivered no later than **2:00 p.m., on Tuesday, August 22, 2017.**

Packages containing submittals shall be presented as such that they may be easily identified. The outside of the package shall be identified as follows:

**Request for Proposal
Public Relations and Marketing Services for the Don Ryan Center of Innovation
Attn: David Nelems**

Packages containing submittals shall be sent to

**Town of Bluffton – Town Hall
20 Bridge Street
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910**

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

Proposals submitted are offers only, and the decision to accept or reject is a function of quality, reliability, capability, reputation, and expertise of the firms submitting proposals. Issuance of this RFP does not obligate DRCI to pay any costs incurred by a respondent in its submission of a proposal or making any necessary studies or designs for the preparation of that proposal, or for procuring or contracting for the services to be furnished under this RFP.

DRCI reserves the right to accept the proposal that is, in its judgment, provides the best value and is most favorable to the interests of DRCI, the Town of Bluffton and to the public; to reject the proposal with the lowest consultant fee; to accept any item of any proposal; to reject any and all proposals; and to waive irregularities and informalities in any proposal submitted or in the RFP process. DRCI reserves the right to award a contract pursuant to the RFP without further discussion with respondents.