



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
For
Media Relations Consultant

Nov. 23, 2020

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is soliciting proposals to establish an annual contract with one (1) media relations consultant to assist with the development and distribution of press releases, limited targeted media pitches and, when required, senior-level communications counsel. The goal of this project is to retain and potentially improve upon the level of local media exposure the Parks Conservancy receives. The consultant will work with Conservancy staff to identify media opportunities and craft approximately three-to-five press releases a month for local distribution. The consultant will leverage media relationships across all channels to maximize positive Conservancy coverage.

Proposal Submission:

- Qualified firms and individuals are invited to submit a proposal meeting the requirements described herein. Only digital proposals will be accepted. All proposals must be received by the Conservancy no later than 4:00 p.m. ET, Dec. 11, 2020. Late proposals will not be considered.
- Submit digital proposals in pdf format to: jpepper@pittsburghparks.org with subject line: MEDIA CONSULTANT RFP

Questions:

Direct all questions regarding this RFP to John Pepper, jpepper@pittsburghparks.org by Dec. 8, 2020.

This Request for Proposal does not commit the Conservancy to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request. The Conservancy reserves the right to accept the proposal that it considers to be in its best interest, reject any or all proposals, or request modifications to any proposals. The Conservancy will be the sole judge in making this determination. All materials submitted to the Conservancy by firms or individuals in response to this RFP become the sole property of the Conservancy and will be used at its discretion unless the proposer clearly identifies any trademarks or patents that protect products submitted. Selection and/or rejection of the firm(s) is at the sole discretion of the Conservancy.

Thank you for your interest in working with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy.

John Pepper
Senior Director, Communications and Marketing
Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy



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About the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy:

The Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is a non-profit entity founded in 1996 by individuals concerned with the deteriorating conditions of Pittsburgh's large regional-scale parks. The organization's mission is to improve the quality of life for the people of Pittsburgh by restoring the park system to excellence in partnership with the government and the community. Projects and programs are conducted with respect for the environment, historic design, and the needs of our diverse region. The Parks Conservancy has worked closely with the City of Pittsburgh since 1998 under an official public interest partnership agreement to restore and develop the city's parks. To date, the Conservancy has raised more than \$130 million for parks and has completed 22 major improvement projects.

Currently active in 22 parks, the Conservancy has expanded into smaller community and neighborhood scale parks throughout Pittsburgh. Capital improvement projects continue to be a focus of the organization's work. However, the Conservancy also provides extensive environmental education programs for school-aged kids, public programs and events for children and adults, as well as ecological restoration planning and services in parks across the city. The Conservancy holds regular fundraising events to support City parks. Currently the organization employs approximately 40 full-time staff with additional seasonal employees.

Response Format:

Responses should include the materials requested within this RFP. Responding firms and individuals should be concise but comprehensive in their submissions.

Consultant Role and Qualifications:

The Conservancy is seeking a consultant to work with the Conservancy's Communications and Marketing team to achieve the project goals described in the Scope of Work below. The Conservancy is looking for firms or individuals that demonstrate the following:

- Strong writing capabilities, specifically message and press release development
- A proven history of media relations success
- Access to a comprehensive local media list
- Experience working with media contacts that cover beats relevant to the Parks Conservancy, including local politics
- Ability to fulfill requests in a timely manner
- Experience providing senior-level communications counsel
- Experience working with non-profit organizations, civic engagement and public service, and/or environmental/park professionals is preferred but not essential
- Located in the Pittsburgh region

SCOPE OF WORK:

Description of Project Goals

- Maximize Parks Conservancy media opportunities
- Craft compelling press releases and distribute on a schedule that will provide the best opportunity for placement
- Distribute, on average, three-to-five press releases monthly
- Generate consistent, positive media impressions for the Conservancy
- Provide intelligent senior-level communications counsel when needed

Below is an outline of what will be required of the selected firm:

- Identify daily client contact
- Develop Conservancy media distribution list
- Meet bi-weekly with members of Conservancy's communications team to discuss media opportunities
- Craft press releases in timely fashion
- Offer press release distribution guidance
- Provide media monitoring service for radio and broadcast clips
- Discuss specific pitch opportunities when budget allows
- Provide senior-level communications counsel when requested

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

Responses to this RFP must cover the following components:

1. Firm Background Information

- Firm Name
- Home Office Address
- Website
- Contact Information for this RFP:
 - Name and Title
 - Phone
 - Fax

- Email

2. Firm Structure and Experience

- Describe the ownership and structure of your firm
- Number of years active
- General services the firm provides, including but not limited to media relations
- Describe your firm's media relations experience, including that of the person(s) who would be working on the account
- Provide your privacy policy with regards to sharing client and account information with outside parties
- Provide a conflict of interest statement that your firm; associate firms and/or key staff may have regarding these services. The statement should not only include actual conflicts, but also any working relationships that may be perceived by disinterested parties as a conflict. If no potential conflicts of interest are identified, please state so
- Provide proof of insurances carried for errors and omissions and fiduciary liability

3. Relevant Expertise / Client References

- Provide three specific examples of press releases crafted by individual(s) who would be working on the account and, if possible, one or two media hits generated from the releases
- List two clients, preferably non-profit organizations, whom we may contact as references. Please also include the number of years you have been working (or worked) with these clients

4. Service Team

- List name/experience of proposed individual(s) who would work on the account. Include information such as:
 - Name of team member
 - Job title of team member
 - Number of years working at the firm
 - Current responsibilities and areas of expertise

5. Small, Women, Disabled Veteran, or Minority-owned Business

Efforts will be made to utilize small, women, disabled veteran, and minority-owned businesses, with the consideration that the primary responsibility is the most favorable return to the Conservancy. If applicable, provide publicly certified documentation or a self-certification statement that is subject to examination. If not applicable, please so state.

6. Proposed Fee Structure / Pricing

Monthly billings should not exceed \$2,000, based on work performed. Please provide proposed fee structure for the account, including billing rates of the individual(s) who would be working on the account, to ensure the goals of the program are met.

Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy is not obligated to select the firm with the lowest fee proposal to perform these professional services.

Patent Indemnity:

The Bidder shall hold the Conservancy, its officers, agents, and employees, harmless from liabilities of any nature or kind on account of use of any copyrighted or non-copyrighted composition, process, patented or unpatented invention, article of appliance furnished or used under this RFP.

Proprietary Proposal Material:

The Conservancy respects your professional privacy. Any proprietary information revealed in the proposal should, therefore, be clearly identified as such. Respondents are advised that all submissions (including those not selected for engagement) may be made available to the public on request upon completion of the process and award of contract.

Equal Opportunity Compliance:

The Conservancy requires all vendors to comply with Federal, State, and local policies and regulations concerning equal opportunity and agrees not to discriminate in its employment because of the employee's or applicant's race, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical handicap or any other trait or characteristic protected by law.

Selection Process:

All eligible proposals will be reviewed and rated for their qualifications, experience, price, and suitability to complete the work. The Conservancy, at its discretion, may request interviews from a short list of firms and individuals and/or request clarifying information from any or all bidders. The Conservancy reserves the right to award the work without further discussion of the proposals submitted. Therefore, proposals should be submitted initially with the most favorable terms that the bidder can propose. All bids are subject to approval by the Conservancy's Board of Directors. Notice to selected bidder to proceed with scope of work is anticipated by Dec. 31, 2020.

Initial proposal evaluation shall be based solely on the information provided in the proposal submittal package. Be sure to include all relevant information and evidence of your firm's record of performance and ability to perform the work.

Right to Reject:

The Conservancy reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this RFP. The Conservancy reserves the right to request modifications to any or all proposals to meet the needs of the work scope. A contract for the accepted proposal will be based upon the factors described in this RFP. The Conservancy reserves the right to waive informalities or irregularities in bids. In case of deviation from enclosed specifications, the bidders shall indicate in writing the exception(s) from the specifications. If no exception(s) is noted, it is understood that the specification will be complied within detail as requested without exception.

AUTHORIZATION:

The undersigned hereby asserts that he/she is duly authorized to submit this proposal, that all information contained in it is true, correct and complete, and that the undersigned is authorized to enter into a contract with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy should he/she be selected and approved for services, as negotiated.

Name of Firm

Name of Principal/CEO/Owner; Print and Signature

Title

Phone

Address

City/State/Zip

Date

License # (if applicable)