Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency
NOACA

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Request for Proposals (RFP) for Professional Service - Podcast CONSULTANT of the "The "NOACA Report®" Show"

Issue Date: April 3rd, 2020

Closing Date: April 17th, 2020
DBE Goal of 0%

NOACA is seeking a qualified person to CONSULTANT the agency's Podcast, The NOACA Report. The deadline for submittals is 12:00PM ET on April 17th, 2020. Please read entire RFP for specific information and requirements.

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1. THE NORTHEAST OHIO AREAWIDE COORDINATING AGENCY (NOACA)

The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) is a Cleveland-based transportation and environmental planning organization that serves as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and designated areawide water quality management agency for the counties of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, and Medina in Ohio.

In these capacities it:

- Works with other organizations to help address northeast Ohio's transportation, air quality, and water quality needs.
- Conducts metropolitan planning for various modes of transportation, including vehicles, freight, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, etc., while considering the transportation system's impact on the environment and land use.
- Prepares the region's long-range transportation plan and short-range transportation improvement program, which is the region's capital budget for federally funded transportation projects.
- Conducts studies that address congestion, improve safety and strengthen community livability.

The vision of NOACA is as follows: NOACA will STRENGTHEN regional cohesion, PRESERVE existing infrastructure, and BUILD a sustainable multimodal transportation system to SUPPORT economic development and ENHANCE quality of life in Northeast Ohio.

NOACA is directed by a 45-member Board of Directors, representing the City of Cleveland and all five NOACA counties and their communities, plus transit agencies, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORSD), the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority, the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT).

The NOACA region is home to 2.1 million people and over 150 units of government. The region is anchored by several urban core cities with the largest being Cleveland.

More information about NOACA is available on our website at www.noaca.org

2. BACKGROUND

The "NOACA Report®" Show will be a monthly podcast launching in June 2020. It is a fresh take and format of NOACA's longstanding effort to connect with the Northeast Ohio region to raise the awareness and understanding for transportation and environmental planning toward a sustainable future. The Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA) will produce 14 podcast episodes for Season 1, highlighting our upcoming development of a Long Range Plan for 2050. Through this Request Proposal (RFP) for professional services, NOACA is seeking an experienced podcast professional to become a Consultant for NOACA to guide the organization on the development of a podcast. The Consultant will help NOACA create contemporary topics that support the vision and mission of our organization and will be responsible for producing the launch of "The NOACA Report" Show. The Consultant will work with NOACA staff and an outside production engineering (if needed).

The term of the contract will be approximately from May 1st, 2020 – December 31, 2020.

For Season 1, NOACA is seeking a podcast CONSULTANT to assist with producing Season 1 using an overall theme of the Long Range Plan for the Northeast Ohio Region. The ending result for each episode should reflect the brand and values of NOACA. The "CONSULTANT" is required to adhere to the organizational goals of NOACA for the "NOACA Report®" Show. These

requirements shall reflect the sentiments of NOACA throughout the development, content, questioning and production of the podcast episodes.

Long Range Plan

At the core of the Long Range Plan is the region's Vision Statement, outlining five distinct goals:

- Strengthen regional cohesion
- Preserve existing infrastructure
- Build a sustainable multimodal transportation system
- Support economic development
- Enhance quality of life in Northeast Ohio

The long range plan currently under development support these goals and under federal surface transportation law must include:

- **Trends and Forecasts** - Regional land use, population, employment and housing data and traffic forecasts
- **Conditions and Performance** - Projected demand for transportation services over 20 years
- **Regional transportation system assessment** - A system-wide approach considering roads, traffic congestion, bridges, transit, non-motorized transportation and intermodal connections
- **Future policies, strategies and projects**
- **Financial Plan** - Cost estimates and reasonably available financial sources for operation, maintenance and capital investments to implement the plan's projects and strategies
- **Asset Management** - How to preserve existing roads and facilities and make efficient use of the existing system
- **Public involvement opportunities** – Engaging stakeholders and the public in the development of the LRTP
- **Air quality/transportation conformity** – the demonstration that the LRTP is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for attaining federal air quality standards

Federal regulations also require urbanized areas that are in nonattainment of federal air quality standards to update their long-range plans every four years.

A key part of the long range plan development process is public engagement and the collection of input from the public and stakeholders on their perceptions of the current state of the transportation and environment systems, their priorities and desires for the future within these areas.

Goals of the Podcast

- We hope to grow our audience network via podcast listenership by broadening our mission, legislative agenda and priorities beyond our current supporters.
- We see the podcast as helping to establish NOACA as a resource and leader for audio storytelling in legislative and policymaking, transportation and environmental planning, safety, equity, land use, workforce mobility, sustainability and innovative technologies as it relates to the issues that affect our region.
- By focusing on NOACA legislative agenda and priorities within our organization's vision and bottom line objectives, we hope to inspire listeners with contemporary issues that will spark new ways of seeing the Northeast Ohio region while encouraging them to connect with communities beyond their own.

- A total of 14 episodes in Season 1 along with a launch in Mid June 2020. The podcast will be published every two weeks on Mondays.
- NOACA expects to have at minimum two episodes completed before the upcoming month release (i.e. Two episodes must be completed before the Mid June Launch). This gives opportunities to market the upcoming episodes.
- Each episode will explore a different angle on the overarching theme for 2020, which is the Long Range Plan for Northeast Ohio.
- Episodes may include a variety of storytelling techniques, contributors (or "guests"), but we also hope to center each episode on topic narratives that will relate to a target-specific and broad audiences to gain public awareness and branding opportunities for NOACA.
- Any reference to contributors will be "GUEST-HOSTS" selected from the NOACA Board of Directors' External Affairs Committee; and Business, Community and Rural Advisory Councils. "GUEST-HOSTS" may also be the NOACA Executive Director. "GUEST-HOSTS" will not be part of every episode produced but may be used at the discretion of Executive Management.

Content, Tone and Aesthetic:

NOACA seeks a "CONSULTANT" that shares an interest in developing coherent episodes of audio stories that:

- Combine innovative scriptwriting, storytelling, experimental field and studio recording techniques, sound design, and editing to develop rich aural experiences.
- Creative, informative, inquisitiveness, and community-centered stories over scholarly authority are preferred to offer ways to understand NOACA's legislative priorities and agenda on a more humanistic level that will convey the impacts of what could happen for a sustainable future and economic growth for the Northeast Ohio region.

3. SCOPE & PROJECT DETAILS

The scope of work includes the production of 14 podcast episodes, each approximately 20-28 minutes in length. The term for this work will run approximately from May 1st, 2020 – December 31, 2020 and entail:

- Recording of 12 podcast episodes as the "CONSULTANT," who will assist NOACA staff to develop questions to varied community guests that consist of elected officials, government, business, social services, technology, transportation, environmental, logistics and other associated industries.
- Coordinate and collaborate with NOACA staff when developing message, scriptwriting and questions for Hosts and Guest Host for each podcast episode.
- Participate in content development meetings with NOACA.
- Work with assigned production team, when needed, to record upcoming segments and topics for current and upcoming episodes.
- Assist with audio editing and sound design for all episodes with production team.
- Conducting audio interviews at NOACA or external locations including associated scheduling, logistics and local travel.
- Contributor for outreach and other coordination in collaboration with NOACA.

- Record and download audios with NOACA podcast equipment or as talent at a NOACA selected recording studio.

NOACA responsibilities will include:

- Collaborating on content development with both “CONSULTANT” and other contributors as deemed necessary.
- Developing topics, background, interviewing contributors such as “CO-CONSULTANTS” and guests for recordings.
- Scriptwriting for all episodes, in collaboration with “CONSULTANT.”
- Covering the cost of equipment, audio, recording and production of audio recordings.
- Covering the cost of podcast host site, Buzzspout.
- Covering the travel costs for CONSULTANT to external locations outside of the NOACA Offices including recording studios.
- In-house location site at NOACA Offices
- Due to the collaborative nature of this project, NOACA will only consider proposals from candidates based in the Northeast Ohio area.
- Proposal evaluation preference will be given to candidates with experience in recording, editing, distributing and marketing podcasts.

Copyright/NOACA Ownership:

NOACA shall own and control in perpetuity all rights in and to all content produced for The “NOACA Report®” Show including the copyrights and other intellectual property rights for all recordings. This includes the use of the trademark name, The “NOACA Report®” Show and logo design that shall not be used without the permission of the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA).

The selected “CONSULTANT” must provide content in final edited audio files via in both uncompressed WAV and MP3 file formats. The content, written or aural cannot be distributed or shared with any entities other than the intended use as described herein this proposal.

“CONSULTANT” must provide full, unedited transcripts and audio recordings of actualities to NOACA.

“CONSULTANT” must provide signed release formed that confirms the statements of NOACA copyright and ownership of all materials, scriptwriting, and audio recordings associated with the podcast.

4. PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

NOACA’s process and timeline for selection of a consultant are as follows:

April 17th, 2020. 12:00 noon - Deadline for Submittals.
Submittals must be received at NOACA by the above deadline. Digital proposals are to be submitted via e-mail to procurement@mpo.noaca.org, but NOACA assumes no responsibility for formatting or transmission errors. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered. Please reference, “RFP - Podcast CONSULTANT” in email subject line.

April 20-24, 2020. Consideration of Submittals and Selection of Interview Candidates
An evaluation team will select candidate(s) from submittals received for interview(s). This process will include review of submittals, references, and other information as necessary, as well as rating of submittals.

April 27-30, 2020. Interviews with Selected Candidates (If Needed).
Interviews will provide an opportunity for NOACA and selected candidates to further gauge their fit and ability to work with each other.

Week of May 4th, 2020 Approval of Contract

5. SELECTION PROCEDURES

NOACA will directly select a consultant based on the requested content and interview.

Persons interested in being considered for selection should respond by submitting (1) copies of the a letter and proposal requirements electronically to procurement@mpo.noaca.org **by 12:00 PM on the response due date** listed above:

Responses received after 12:00 PM on the response due date will not be considered.

5.1 Requirements for Request for Proposal

A. Instructions for Preparing Request for Proposal

1. Provide the information requested with a cover and required content (See Item B below), in the same order listed, along with a letter signed by the responder of this RFP.

2. The proposal shall be limited to twelve (12) 8½" x 11" single-sided pages. Audio samples must be in a downloadable file sent online with proposal.

3. Please adhere to the following requirements:

    a. Please use a minimum font size of 11-point and maintain margins of 1" on all four sides.
    b. Page numbers must be centered at the bottom of each page.
    c. Use 8½" x 11" paper only.

B. RFP PROPOSAL CONTENT AND FORMAT:

To facilitate an expedient and objective evaluation of all submitted responses, it is essential that all respondents to this RFP adhere to the desired response format articulated below. NOACA may modify or clarify the RFP by written notice to the responders. Additional information beyond what is requested below and deemed relevant will be accepted, but responses not satisfying this minimum standard will not be accepted.

Section 1. Executive Summary:

Please provide a statement that describes why NOACA should choose you as its “CONSULTANT” in regards to the development of content and production. Describe your vision, high-level summary of project management approaches, delivery model, and a statement of differentiation that would set you aside from your competition.

Section 2. Professional Information:

In order to assess your compatibility we would like to have information on your background, experience and qualifications. Describe the skills you will bring to the project, highlighting your expertise with specific elements of our description of content and/or scope of work.

You may submit a résumé or professional biography for this section.

Section 3. Project Vision:

Provide a sample condensed outline for two episodes. This will not necessarily be used if you are chosen as the “CONSULTANT.” The purpose is to identify how well you know and understand NOACA and to give a sense of how you would approach the theme, and what types of stories you would potentially include. The focus of Season 1 is Long Range Plan. Please see the requirements below to be included in the outline:

- A one-paragraph description of Episode 1 and 2.
- Describe the overall vision, aesthetic, topics to be discussed, etc.
- Short (two-three sentence) descriptions for these two episodes, including which guests you might feature.

Section 4. Creative Work Samples:

Describe your experience working with public, government, corporate and nonprofit institutions in developing innovative and creative audio content.

Please provide the following:

- Examples of recent podcast episodes or audio projects. Samples focused on community related topics are encouraged.
- Samples should demonstrate experimental and/or innovative scriptwriting, recording, editing, and sound design.
- Examples of “inspirational” podcasts and audio stories by other producers that help illustrate or articulate what you hope to produce.

Section 5. Technical Experience with Equipment & Audio Recording

Please provide what type of podcast recording equipment you have used or studio recording, downloading methods, audio host sites and other associated podcast technical experience that would benefit the development and execution of the podcast. List any technical knowledge and experience.

Section 6. Project Budget

NOACA has evaluated industry costs toward hourly rates for public and non-profit podcast CONSULTANTs and will select a candidate based on the monthly hours from the tasks listed below:

- 8 hours for start-up and ending production (8 hours) May 2020; December 2020
- 3.5 hours an episode (14) (49 hours) May – November
- 10 hours travel cost

Please provide a proposed budget for services based on the estimated 67 hours noted above.

6.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Criteria	Weight %
Demonstrated understanding of NOACA and the area we serve; completed project vision and audio work samples;	20
Professional experienced in journalism, t.v., radio broadcasting; proven podcast CONSULTANTing, production, scriptwriting, interviewing skills; interfaced with public and community organizations in NE Ohio.	40
Technical experience with equipment and audio recordings for podcast	20
Professional Services – Budget (67 hours: April – December 2020)	20
Total	**100**

7.0 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

A. It is the policy of NOACA, as required by the United States Department of Transportation (US DOT) that Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) shall have equal opportunity to compete for this federally assisted contract and/or subcontract with another other consultant to perform the requested services. Consequently, the requirements of Title 49 CFR Part 26 will apply to this contract. If not a DBE itself, the Consultant must use its best efforts to solicit from and to utilize DBE subconsultants with meaningful minority groups and female representation among their employees. The Consultant must ensure that the DBE subcontractor(s) is performing a "commercially useful function" as defined in NOACA policy.

Under this proposal, a DBE Goal has been set at 0%. If required, the percentage at least under this agreement shall be performed by certified DBE firms. The percentage goal may be met if the awarded Consultant is DBE certified. DBE certification must be from the State of Ohio.

Only firms certified as DBE through a State's Unified Certification Program (UCP) will be counted toward meeting this goal. A listing of currently certified DBEs in Ohio can be accessed on the UCP website at www.ohioucp.org. Potential DBEs may also access the website to obtain information on how to become certified. To qualify for certification as a DBE, an applicant must meet the eligibility standards established in the federal regulations at 49 CFR Part 26 and 13 CFR Part 121. DBE certification must be in place at the time of contract award and throughout performance of the contract.

The Consultant must document the progress and efforts being made in securing the services of DBE subconsultants. In the event the Consultant is unable to meet the DBE goal placed on the contract, a request for a waiver of all or part of the goal may be made to NOACA. The written request must indicate a good faith effort was made to meet the goal.

The Consultant's proposal must include the percentage of work to be performed by each DBE subconsultant, and a description of the work to be performed by each. Consultant proposals that do not include the minimum percentage of DBE participation noted above, or that cannot demonstrate good faith efforts to include DBEs, will be rejected. If selected, the Consultant's price proposal shall reflect the required level of DBE participation, or provide an explanation of how the requirement will be met in later phases of the work.

GOOD FAITH EFFORTS

The Consultant must document the progress and efforts being made in securing the services of DBE subcontractors. In the event the Consultant is unable to meet the DBE Goal placed on a project, good faith efforts to secure DBE participation must be demonstrated. The written request must indicate a good faith effort was made to meet the goal and be sent to the DBE Liaison Officer, NOACA Division of Programming, 1299 Superior Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, 44114. There will be no extension of time for the project granted if the Contractor wishes to avail themselves of this process.

NOACA shall consider the following information and documentation when considering Good Faith Efforts (GFE) have been met:

1. Dollar value and % of DBE goal. Dollar value and % of waiver request.

2. Signed copy of each subcontract or purchase order agreement between the Consultant and DBE subconsultant utilized in meeting the contract goal.

3. Copy of dated written communication, fax confirmation, personal contact, follow up and negotiation with the DBE's.

4. Copy of dated written communication and/or fax confirmation that bidder solicited and provided DBE's with adequate information about the plans, specifications and requirements of the contract in a timely manner to assist them in responding to a solicitation.

5. Copy of dated written communication of each noncompetitive DBE quote that includes the dollar value of each reference item and work type.

6. Copy of dated written communication of DBE's that were not interested in providing a quote for the project.

7. Documentation of all negotiating efforts and reason for rejecting DBE bids for service.

8. Solicitations made by the Consultant for subcontracting opportunities and DBE quotes through associations, networks, or other appropriate methods of announcement.

9. Documentation of GFE to meet the DBE subcontract goal, by looking beyond the items typically subcontracted or consideration of subcontracting items normally performed by the prime as a way to meet the DBE goal. NOACA will review the submitted documentation and issue a written decision within ten (10) business days.

COMMERCIALLY USEFUL FUNCTION

A. NOACA is required to monitor DBE Consultants and subconsultants to ensure they are performing a Commercially Useful Function (CUF) on the project. A DBE is performing a Page 13 CUF when it is responsible for execution of the work of the contract and is carrying out its responsibilities by actually performing, managing, and supervising the work involved with the DBE's employees. A DBE firm must have the proper North American Industry Notification System (NAICS) codes for the type of work they are performing. The DBE must also be responsible, with respect to materials and supplies used on the contract, for negotiating price, determining quality and quantity, ordering the materials and installation (where applicable), and paying for the work components itself.

B. Consultants agree not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, age, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Consultants further agree to comply with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 49 C.F.R. Part 21.

C. NONDISCRIMINATION Consultants agree not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, age, creed, sex, sexual orientation or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment or recruitment advertising, layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Consultants further agree to comply with all requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 49 C.F.R. Part 21.

D. An RFP does not constitute an offer or a contract. No contract may be awarded without a resolution by the NOACA Board of Directors.

E. NOACA reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at anytime.

NOACA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive minor irregularities in the proposal process. NOACA may accept any proposal if such action is believed to be in the best interest of the agency.

F. NOACA is not liable for any cost incurred by the proposer prior to execution of a contract.

G. The contract between the successful proposer and NOACA shall include all documents mutually entered into specifically, including the contract instrument, the RFP and the response to the RFP. The contract must include, and be consistent with, the provisions stated in the RFP.

H. The prime consultant or system provider will be required to assume the responsibility for all services offered in the proposal regardless of whether directly performed by the prime consultant. Further, the prime consultant will be the sole point of contact for NOACA with regard to contractual matters.

I. The consultant project team shall be approved by NOACA. NOACA must approve any changes in the project team.

J. Any award of contract will be to the consultant or contractor that provides the highest value relative to costs.

K. Consultants must show proof of liability insurance. NOACA reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP or to revise the timeline at anytime.

L. Suspended or Debarred Firms or individuals included on the Systems Award Management (SAM) and Ohio Findings for Recovery as suspended or debarred are not eligible for selection.

8. QUESTIONS

For questions regarding the RFP, please contact procurement@mpo.noaca.org. All questions must be submitted by email and be submitted by April 10th, 2020, 12 noon. All answers will be publicly posted on www.NOACA.org.

9. SUBMITTALS

Submissions must be made electronically by **12:00 noon on Wednesday, April 17, 2020**, using a PDF or Microsoft Office format. To submit the proposal, please email the proposal to procurement@mpo.noaca.org. If the proposal is a large file, greater than 65MB, please instead request the File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site and password for posting the proposal materials.

NOACA supports environmental consciousness and discourages mailed submissions for this RFP. However, for material that must be mailed, use:

Susanna Merlone, Director of Administrative Services
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