



Cover Sheet - Revised Request for Proposals, Communications and PR

Due to new internal information regarding funding available to support communications and public relations as well as feedback received during the submission process for the original RFP, Washington Maritime Blue has decided to re-issue the RFP with revisions.

Revisions are highlighted in the revised version and summarized below:

New due date for proposals: January 23, 2024

New announcement date: January 29, 2024

Changes to project initiatives

ADDED: Blue Wind Collaborative communications, media outreach, Quiet Sound program communications, Equity Engagement communications

Changes to target audiences

ADDED: WA Government officials

Changes to evaluation criteria

CHANGED: Budget not to exceed \$75,000 over twelve months

Changes to Terms and Conditions

CHANGED: This contract will have the potential for extension or renewal.



Washington Maritime Blue
1900 W Nickerson St., Suite 301
Seattle, WA 98119

January 10, 2024

Request for Proposals (RFP) - Communications and Public Relations General Support

Washington Maritime Blue is seeking competitive proposals from qualified vendors to provide assistance with media relations, storytelling, social media strategy, and marketing related to events and programs.

Project Overview:

Ongoing communications and public relations support for small non-profit organization, focused on major announcements, event advertising, coordinating with media for interviews and presence at events.

Initiatives include:

- Blue Ventures programming, including launch of accelerator applications and announcement of cohort selection
- Blue Wind Collaborative communications, media outreach
- Quiet Sound communications, media outreach
- Equity Engagement communications, media outreach
- Promotion for Maritime Blue member and public events
- Advising on social media and PR strategy

Background:

Washington Maritime Blue is a non-profit, strategic alliance formed to accelerate innovation and sustainability in support of an inclusive blue economy. With a mission to implement Washington State's Strategy for the Blue Economy delivered by Governor Jay Inslee's Maritime Innovation Advisory Council, we are a partnership between industry, public sector, research & training institutions, and community organizations. Maritime Blue works to create a world-class, thriving, equitable and sustainable maritime and ocean industry through knowledge sharing, joint innovation, entrepreneurship, commercialization, business and workforce development.

Our target audiences for this work are:

- Industry, government, research, and community organizations that are engaged in work relevant to our mission for potential engagement and membership in programs and initiatives



- Potential public, private and philanthropic funders interested to fund our organization and programs.
- Potential individual and institutional investors interested to fund our startups engaged in our Blue Ventures programs.
- State and federal government officials

Scope of Work:

Public Relations:

- Develop and execute a strategic public relations plan aligned with our organization's objectives.
- Craft press releases, media advisories, and other communication materials as necessary.
- Establish and maintain relationships with relevant media outlets, journalists, and influencers.
- Coordinate media interviews, features, and opportunities for organizational representatives.
- Monitor media coverage and provide regular reports on PR efforts and outcomes.

Media Relations:

- Create a media outreach strategy to increase positive coverage and visibility.
- Pitch story ideas, news, and events to secure media placements across various platforms.
- Assist in crisis communication and management, if necessary.
- Track and analyze media coverage, impressions, and engagement metrics.

Social Media Support:

- Develop a comprehensive social media strategy aligned with organizational goals.
- Manage and curate content for various social media platforms (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn).
- Monitor social media channels, engage with followers, and respond to inquiries/comments.
- Create and implement social media campaigns to promote events, fundraising efforts, and awareness initiatives.
- Provide analytics and regular reports on social media performance and audience engagement.
- Deliverables:
- Monthly/Quarterly reports outlining PR, media, and social media activities, performance metrics, and insights.
- Scheduled strategy meetings and progress updates with our team.



- Creative content (press releases, social media posts, etc.) aligned with the organization's voice and values.

Budget and Timeline:

Total budget not to exceed \$75,000 over twelve months.

Proposal Submission Deadline:

All proposals must be submitted by **January 23, 2024 at 5:00 PM** (PT). Late proposals will not be considered.

Proposal Submission Address:

Proposals should be submitted to info@maritimeblue.org.

Point of Contact:

All communications regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Camille Smith
Contract and Finance Manager
camille@maritimeblue.org
(360) 230-8184

Proposal Requirements:

Executive Summary: Provide a brief summary of your proposal, highlighting key strengths and differentiators.

Company Overview: Describe your company, including its history, capabilities, and relevant experience. Please include information about the company's diversity in contraction participation, if any.

Project Approach: Outline your proposed approach to the project, including a timeline, milestones, and any unique methodologies.

Qualifications and Experience: Provide information on your team's qualifications and relevant experience for similar projects.

Cost Proposal: Clearly outline the cost of your proposed services, including a detailed breakdown of all associated costs.

References: Provide references from at least two clients for whom you have completed similar projects.



Compliance: Confirm your willingness and ability to comply with all applicable laws, regulations, and standards.

Selection Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Proposal completeness and compliance with RFP requirements
- Vendor qualifications and experience
- Proposed approach and methodology
- Cost competitiveness
- References

Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process:

| EVALUATION CRITERIA | Points |
|---|--------|
| Overall Experience and Demonstrated Results <i>Evaluation includes assessment of company history and experience as it relates to the project described in the RFP, evidence of past performance, quality and relevance of past work, references, and related items.</i> | 35 |
| Strategic Approach and Methodology <i>Evaluation includes assessment of the company's approach to the work and the capacity to perform the scope of work within the specified time frame.</i> | 30 |
| Budget/Cost Effectiveness <i>Efficient use of resources and delivery of quality services in relation to budget. Allocation is reasonable and appropriate. Proposed budget may not exceed \$75,000 over twelve months.</i> | 30 |
| Diversity in subcontracting participation <i>Additional points possible for firms demonstrating either certified business enterprise (WMBE, etc.) or non-certified, but meeting criteria as small (under 20 employees), women-owned or operated, and/or BIPOC owned or operated.</i> | 5 pts |

Proposers will be notified of the results of the competition by **January 29, 2024.**

Terms and Conditions:

Vendors may not include subcontractors in their proposal. Subcontracting is disallowed on this contract.



Washington Maritime Blue will remit payment on a monthly basis using Net 30 terms.

Standard contract terms and conditions are attached to this RFP. **This contract will have the potential for extension or renewal.**

Right to Reject Proposals:

Washington Maritime Blue reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this Request for Proposals (RFP). The rejection of a proposal may occur if, in the sole discretion of Washington Maritime Blue, it is determined that the proposal does not meet the specified requirements, lacks key information, or if the proposer fails to comply with the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP.

Washington Maritime Blue also reserves the right to reject any proposal, in whole or in part, if it is deemed in the best interest of Washington Maritime Blue to do so. The decision to reject a proposal will be final, and Washington Maritime Blue is under no obligation to provide feedback or justification for the rejection.

Vendors submitting proposals acknowledge this right of Washington Maritime Blue and agree not to challenge or dispute the decision to reject any proposal. In the event of a rejection, Washington Maritime Blue may, at its discretion, enter into negotiations with another vendor or reissue a revised Request for Proposals.

Washington Maritime Blue appreciates the effort and resources invested by all participating vendors and will notify each vendor of the outcome of the proposal evaluation process.

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Washington Maritime Blue looks forward to receiving your proposal and appreciates your interest in working with us on this project. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please contact Camille Smith at camille@maritimeblue.org.