

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS MARKETING & OUTREACH SERVICES

Issue Date: October 14, 2021

Submissions Due: October 29, 2021

Finalist Presentations: tbd

Contract Execution: tbd

Background

The Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City is a 501c4 nonprofit organization contracted by the City of Kansas City, Missouri to facilitate economic development. The organization's mission is to grow the city's economic tax base through the attraction and retention of both domestic and international business. The EDCKC also works with seven affiliated statutory agencies to provide resources for public investment programs. Our main focused areas include business retention and expansion, business recruitment, land and redevelopment, financial support through capital access and marketing and promotion of Kansas City, Missouri.

Request for Proposals

The EDCKC is soliciting proposals from experienced firms to manage its marketing and outreach services. It is acceptable for firms to partner to provide the services outlined in this RFP. Firms with economic development or government experience are encouraged to submit.

Objectives

The primary objective of this RFP is to effectively partner with a firm to provide services including, but not limited to marketing, communications, media relations, brand development, creative design, website development and maintenance, and social media. Our goals include:

- Refresh the EDCKC's brand.
- Design, develop and implement a strategic marketing plan with measurable goals.
- Elevate and position Kansas City, Missouri as a prime location for relocation and expansion in key targeted industries.
- Increase awareness and advocacy of the organization's services, programs, initiatives, and agencies. Provide marketing support for EDCKC's top five strategic initiatives (See addendum for description of each initiative).

Scope of Services

The list below is a sample of requested services.

Planning & Strategy

- Conduct, or support conducting, primary market research as needed to identify appropriate target audiences, strategies, and tactics to achieve marketing objectives.
- Develop a comprehensive annual marketing and communications strategic plan to meet marketing objectives including key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Follow and recommend application of industry trends and insights to support any necessary adjustments to the strategic plan.

Brand Development

- Create messaging that can be used in various channels to drive awareness, create an emotional connection, and educate on key brand elements.
- Develop material and concepts for all the EDCKC affiliated agencies and initiatives, as needed.

Media Relations

- Perform a media audit and develop a strategic media plan including local and industry focused media.
- Create and maintain targeted media lists (local, trade, national and international).
- Develop and pitch stories, press releases, fact sheets and industry highlights to media and coordinate media interviews.
- Follow and recommend advertising adjustments and/or placement based on trends and/or unique opportunities.
- Support communication efforts including announcements, blog posts and monthly eNewsletter. Identify and submit for industry award opportunities.

Creative Services / Graphic Design

- Assist with copywriting and editing.
- Develop creative concepts for a variety of different mediums including graphic design, social media, collateral, website, advertising, video, and special campaigns, as needed.
- Support the EDCKC internal marketing needs by providing integrated collateral templates.

Website Development and Maintenance

- Perform a website audit.
- Refresh content keeping in mind lead generation and search engine optimization (SEO). Develop content for additional web pages, as needed.
- Work with EDCKC to further develop and maintain a digital presence that delivers on brand and supports the organization's goals.
- Provide site log reports to help measure and understand visitor behavior in order to improve website performance including, but not limited to, web traffic analysis, page views, visitor trends and path analysis.

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Social Media

- Coordinate with current social media vendor to develop social media strategy and/or content for Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

Account Management

- Meet with the EDCKC staff as needed for the purpose of carrying out strategic marketing initiatives.
- Prepare schedules for all projects to ensure they are completed in timely manner.
- Ensure budget and quality control including auditing invoices for time and services.
- Provide weekly status reports on the progress of all open projects.
- Provide analytical data reports to measure overall effectiveness and performance at monthly marketing meeting.

The overall creative strategy and plan will be developed in coordination with the EDCKC. It is requested that firm(s) be able to recommend strategies and expand the impact of the EDCKC's brand.

The EDCKC reserves the right to perform, manage and/or administer any function referenced within the Scope of Services (SOS). This may alter the amount of overall funds and projects administered by the contract and will be determined on a year-to-year basis.

Proposal Requirements

The following information should be included in the proposal. Joint bidders should submit only one proposal on behalf of their group and should clearly define the respective areas of responsibility by each firm. A lead/fiscal firm should be designated as well. The EDCKC will only execute a contract with one firm.

Please address the following in the RFP proposal:

- Description of the firm including location of the office and the firm's presence in Kansas City, Missouri.
- Indicate any certifications including MBE/WBE.
Describe why your firm is interested in this account.
Provide information on the firm 's expertise in working with municipalities, governments, economic development agencies and/or any other information that may be important.
- List names, qualifications and roles of the individual(s) who would be directly involved in the creation and implementation of the scope of services.
- Provide a brief statement regarding the firm's approach to client interaction.
- Describe strategies the firm would recommend and provide a creative brief before each campaign or project outlining goals and objectives, audience, budget, and measurement.
- Provide an associated timeframe to complete each of the components.
- Provide information regarding fees, third party costs, and billing terms.
- Provide three recent and appropriate examples of the firm's work (economic development specific if applicable).

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Timeline

Proposals submitted will be reviewed and evaluated by the EDCKC. During the evaluation process, EDCKC reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from the firm. Finalist presentations and execution of a contract are to be determined by the EDCKC.

Terms & Conditions

The term of this agreement will be for a period of three years with the possibility of extension. An extension of the agreement will be determined based on performance. Any conditional expectations on the part of the proposer for performance by the EDCKC must be set forth in the proposal.

The EDCKC reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted and may use any ideas in proposals regardless of whether that proposal is selected. Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the firm of the conditions contained in this request for proposals, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submitted and confirmed in the contract between the EDCKC and the firm selected. Specific details of all proposals may become public information upon execution of a contract or upon rejection of all proposals.

The EDCKC will negotiate contract terms upon final selection. The contract or agreement will outline terms, scope, budget, and any other necessary items.

EDC reserves and may exercise one or more of the following rights and options regarding this RFP:

1. To reject any and all bids, to seek additional bids, to enter into negotiations and subsequently contract with more than one firm.
2. To select the successful firm on the basis of the Proposal meeting functional and operational requirements, and not necessarily the lowest price. If no firm successfully meets the criteria outlined, EDC reserves the right not to award any contract.
3. To evaluate separately the individual components of each Proposal and to contract with separate firms for any individual component(s).
4. To cancel or withdraw this RFP without the substitution of another RFP, or prior to award, alter the terms and conditions of this RFP.
5. To conduct credit checks and investigations as to the qualifications of a firm at any time prior to the award of a resultant agreement. Publication of this RFP, and the receipt of firm Proposals, in no way obligate EDC to contract for any product and/or service with any respondent to this RFP.
6. To alter (within reason) the required schedule at its sole discretion.
7. To delay the delivery, installation or testing of any product and/or service provided by respondent without any penalty whatsoever.
8. To modify specific contractual terms and conditions in this document prior to execution.

Contract Amendment

Any contractual changes shall be made in writing and shall be mutually agreed upon by both the EDCKC and the successful firm.

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Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City | RFP for Marketing & Outreach Services

Discrepancies

If discrepancies between sections and other errors are found in the proposals, the EDCKC may reject the proposal, or at its sole discretion retain the proposal and ignore any obvious inadvertent errors.

Non-collusion

The proposer certifies that the costs included in its proposal have been arrived at independently and without consultation with any competitor or representative of the City.

Proposal Preparation Costs

The EDCKC is not responsible for any costs incurred in the preparation of this proposal.

Signatures

An officer of the proposing firm empowered to bind the firm in a contract shall sign the proposals and any clarifications to it.

Non-Discrimination

The successful firm shall not discriminate or permit discrimination in its operation or employment practices against any person or group on the grounds of age, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender or disability and shall furnish evidence of compliance with this provision when so requested by the EDCKC.

Tax-exempt Entity

The EDCKC is a tax-exempt entity and therefore taxes are not to be included in a proposer's fee calculations.

Submission of Proposals

Firms shall submit five hard copies of the proposal to the address below no later than October 29, 2021. Proposals received after the due date will not be considered and will be returned to the firm unopened.

Mail to: Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City
Attn: Heather A. Brown, Interim President/CEO
300 Wyandotte Street, Suite 400
Kansas City, MO 64105

An electronic copy of the proposal should also be sent via email:

To: hbrown@edckc.com

Questions regarding the contents of this RFP may be submitted via email to Hbrown@edckc.com before October 29, 2021.

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Economic Development Corporation of Kansas City | RFP for Marketing & Outreach Services

Addendum

Below are the EDCKC's top five strategic initiatives that shall be incorporated into the overall strategic marketing plan.

1. EDC Loan Corporation Refocus

There is a general lack of capital resources targeted to the City's more distressed areas including minority and female business communities. Therefore, the EDC Loan Corporation (EDCLC) is being refocused to help address this issue.

The EDCLC will be revising/refining its mission to focus solely on providing capital loan products to MBE/WBE businesses in Kansas City's distressed areas. The EDCKC's staff will undertake marketing activities in the targeted areas making sure there is awareness and access to EDCLC's products.

Marketing Goal: Create and implement a marketing strategy to increase awareness of EDCLC's mission and service offering.

2. Urban CAPS/Youth Apprenticeship Program

There are only a few structured school-to-work programs serving Kansas City Missouri's urban core. Thus, resulting in a lack of exposure to different job/career opportunities and part-time income for area students. Meanwhile, area companies are increasingly facing workforce shortages through attrition and skill gaps.

The EDCKC will assist in establishing a new workforce pipeline for participating area companies through the development of a structured school-to-work opportunity for disadvantaged high school students intended to expose students to possible career opportunities in a variety of fields including professions (i.e., CAPS program), skilled trades and entry level positions (i.e., apprenticeships). Students will receive school credit, hands-on experience, an hourly wage, and potential for full-time employment with a sponsoring company post-graduation.

Marketing Goal: Create promotional marketing material to increase awareness and engagement from potential sponsors and investors.

3. Blue Valley Redevelopment Implementation

Kansas City's East side is increasingly disconnected from opportunity areas within the metro. Land ownership is fragmented, and the area's image is too uncertain to expect that quality redevelopment will happen without significant public stewardship and investment. Therefore, the EDCKC is leading the implementation of the Blue River Valley Industrial Corridor (BRVIC) redevelopment strategy intended to

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bring quality jobs back to the East side and repair the environment of the corridor. This initiative involves a multi-year EDCKC/City commitment to jump-start the process and will include marketing/branding, fund development, land assembly, advocacy, grant-writing and technical assistance provided to property owners and business groups.

Marketing Goal: Establish marketing and branding strategy for the redevelopment of the BRVIC to engage potential sponsors and investors.

4. Kansas City Minority Business Accelerator

Minority businesses have significantly smaller sales and are fewer per capita throughout the Nation. Less than six percent of minority businesses have employees or have the scale to attract financing and/or capital. In fact, Kansas City is the eighth worst metro (out of the largest 50 metros) for diversity among entrepreneurs trailing behind Denver, St. Louis, and Memphis.

To help address this problem, the EDCKC will focus on establishing a minority businesses accelerator to help foster a new generation of Kansas City minority entrepreneurs. The accelerator program will provide access to early-stage and growth capital, mentorship, and resources to support the growth of minority-owned business. The accelerator will also help companies develop strong relationships with others in the minority community as well as education institutions and the corporate community.

Marketing Goal: Establish marketing and branding strategy to engagement potential sponsors and investors.

5. Enhanced Industry Focused Marketing

Kansas City, Missouri competes globally for attraction-based opportunities. Through a relationship with our regional partners, the current strategy focuses on interaction with national site consultants. The EDCKC wants to implement a strategic industry focused marketing plan that showcases Kansas City, Missouri's assets, and opportunities directly to businesses in AdvanceKC target sectors including financial services, supply chain logistics, architecture and engineering, and information technology.

Marketing Goal: Develop and implement a strategic marketing plan for industry-related attraction/recruitment to Kansas City, Missouri.