

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL VOLUNTEER MARKETING AND RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

The Borough of Bellefonte (“Borough”) is seeking proposals from qualified vendor(s) to develop and implement a marketing and recruitment campaign designed to recruit volunteer firefighters for the Bellefonte Fire Department (“BFD”). The Borough is a recipient of a Federal Emergency Management Agency Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant to promote the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters into the BFD.

All proposals in response to this RFP shall be submitted as PDF documents to Lori McGowan. Proposals must be in a sealed folder or envelop and clearly marked with the RFP# and RFP name (“Volunteer Marketing and Recruitment Campaign”). Six (6) hard copies must be included in the submittal package. Faxed proposals will not be accepted. All documents must be received no later than April 28, 2021, 4:00PM EST.

Proposals must be delivered or mailed to:

Bellefonte Borough
Attention: Lori McGowan
236 W. Lamb Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823

All communications or questions specifically related to the procedural aspects of this RFP should be directed to:

Donald Holderman
Assistant Borough Manager
dholderman@bellefonte.gov | (814) 355-1501 Ext. 215

Communications or questions pertaining to the scope of work, the preparation or submittal of a proposal, and any other specific deliverables should be directed to:

Nick Caputo
Bellefonte Fire Department
Recruitment/Retention Coordinator
njcaputo@aol.com | (814) 404-3282

Proposals will be opened at the Bellefonte Borough Council meeting held on May 3, 2021 beginning at 7:30 PM at the Municipal Building, 2nd floor Council Chambers, 236 W. Lamb Street, Bellefonte, PA. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, council meetings may be held virtually using the Zoom platform. If this occurs, all submitters will be sent a Zoom link to view the bid opening.

The bid award is anticipated to be made at the June 7, 2021 Council meeting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
BIDDER SUBMITTAL EXPECTATIONS	3
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	4
PROJECT DESCRIPTION	5
SCOPE OF WORK	6
MARKETING AND ADVERTISING	6
RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY, TACTICS AND MANAGEMENT	8
PROPOSAL FORMAT	9
SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS	10
RFP/PROJECT TIMELINE	11
BUDGET, BILLING AND PAYMENT TERMS	11
EVALUATION, SELECTION AND CONTRACT AWARD CRITERIA	12

BIDDER SUBMITTAL EXPECTATIONS

Proposals received prior to the submittal deadline will be treated as confidential up to the submittal deadline. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered in the evaluation process.

If the Bidder takes exception to any statements or requests herein, it must be clearly stated in the proposal.

The Borough reserves the right to request additional information or clarifications from any Bidder as reasonably required, and the right to request and conduct interviews.

The Borough reserves the right to retain all proposals submitted.

Submission of a proposal indicates acceptance by the Bidder of the conditions contained in the RFP, unless clearly and specifically noted in the proposal submittal and confirmed in the contract between the Borough and the selected vendor.

Following engagement, should the Borough find that the firm failed in any material respect to perform its obligations under the agreement; the Borough may cancel the agreement. The successful Bidder shall be liable for damages from such breach including reasonably foreseeable incidental and consequential damages.

The Bidder shall promptly return all work papers and work in progress to the Borough. The Bidder shall provide the Borough with at least 120 days prior written notice of its intent to terminate any agreement.

The Borough will not be liable for any costs incurred by any Bidder in connection with this RFP or any proposal by any Bidder. The expenses incurred by Bidder in the preparation, submission, or presentation are the sole responsibility of Bidder. The Borough shall not be liable for any costs not included in the proposal nor contracted for subsequently.

Bidders are reminded that the specifications stated in this RFP are the minimum level required and that bids submitted must be for services that meet or exceed the minimum level of all features specifically listed. Proposals offering less than the minimums specified will be considered non-responsive.

Interested Bidders are encouraged to provide any additional information not otherwise requested that may aid the Borough in awarding this bid.

It is the responsibility of all Bidders to examine the entire RFP and seek clarification of any requirement that may not be clear and to check all responses for accuracy before submitting a proposal. Negligence in preparing a bid confers no right of withdrawal after the submission deadline. Bidders are strongly encouraged to: (i) consider applicable laws and/or economic conditions that may affect cost, progress, and performance; (ii)

correlate Bidder's knowledge and observations with the RFP document and other related data; (iii) promptly notify the Borough of all conflicts, errors, ambiguities, or discrepancies which a Bidder has discovered in or between this RFP and other related documents.

The Borough reserves the right to waive any immaterial technicalities, defects or informalities, reject any and/or all bids or portions thereof, re-advertise, and the right at its sole discretion to accept the proposal most favorable to its interest.

All material, data collected, reports generated, and related work product produced by the selected Bidder on behalf of the Borough are public record and become the property of the Borough.

The Bidder may not share program materials, customer data, industry or program participant contact information, etc. unless explicitly authorized by the Borough.

Responding Bidders must provide proof of adequate insurance and bonding. All Bidders will be checked against the SAM.gov database to ensure the Bidder and any of its subcontractors are permitted to receive funds from the federal government awarded through federal grants. If a Bidder is on the do not use list, the bid will not be considered.

All funding is provided by FEMA (federal government). If at any time FEMA deems the use of any funds for the product or service as non-reimbursable under SAFER guidelines or is not allowed under our grant, or any federal, state or local law, the Borough reserves the right to cancel any activity with such notice from FEMA.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The Borough of Bellefonte, referred herein as "Borough," invites qualified firms, referred to herein as "Bidder" who can provide comprehensive volunteer firefighter marketing and recruitment services for the Bellefonte Fire Department (BFD) as outlined herein.

The Borough is a recipient of a Federal Emergency Management Agency Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant to promote the recruitment and retention of volunteer firefighters into the BFD. The overall goal of the grant is to increase, train, and equip the number of volunteer firefighters in the BFD. The BFD consists of two fire companies: Logan Fire Company No. 1 and Undine Fire Company No. 2.

The period of performance (POP) for the grant is December 3, 2019, through December 2, 2024.

The purpose of this RFP is to identify, select, and engage one or more companies/individuals to successfully execute the marketing objectives of the grant program

as outlined in this RFP. Proposals will be solicited through competitive negotiations to provide marketing services, and develop and coordinate a comprehensive recruitment campaign in order to increase the number of volunteer fire personnel. The marketing effort will target prospective volunteers across the Borough and Centre County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The marketing and recruitment campaigns will target both general and specific audiences, and make the general public aware of existing volunteer programs and recruitment opportunities. The campaign will target but not be limited to the following:

- All Centre County residents
- High school, vocational school, and college students
- Individuals with current/prior public safety, healthcare, or military experience
- Empty nesters seeking volunteer opportunities
- Various other demographics as identified by the market research

The awarded Bidder's primary point of contact and volunteer liaison related to the development, implementation, and analysis of the campaign will be Nick Caputo, Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Coordinator.

The awarded Bidder will be expected to provide significant strategy and input on target demographics. Interviewing current volunteers, volunteer leadership, political officials, residents, and other related parties will be a key component of the overall vision for the marketing campaign.

All marketing campaign material will feed into a **centralized recruitment hub website** serving as a resource for prospective volunteers to learn more about volunteering, to formally request additional information, and to formally complete and submit a volunteer application of interest. The recruitment website will need to be created and housed on the Bellefonte Borough website under the Bellefonte Fire Department platform. **The BFD platform will need to be designed and developed as a component of this RFP. Other website hosting, applications, platforms, or solutions may be considered herein, but must be fully described in the Bidder's response.**

The two volunteer agencies' websites will be reviewed and updated according to the established marketing/branding plan, and will feed into the Bellefonte Borough/Bellefonte Fire Department website.

This marketing/branding component shall include, but not be limited to, social media and research marketing, print, billboard, video, radio/TV, and other recommended platforms.

The Bidder's response must include an overview of the approach and recommended channels based on their experience, with the recognition that the actual platforms may change after meeting with key stakeholders, as well as ongoing monitoring of best practices.

The successful Bidder should be solutions oriented and flexible in their approach based on changing marketing conditions.

SCOPE OF WORK

The successful Bidder will design and assist the BFD with volunteer recruitment campaigns across multiple platforms, including but not limited to: broadcast media, print media, special events marketing, social media presence and advertising, printed recruitment materials, and recruitment videos for broadcast advertising on social media and other platforms.

The Borough reserves the exclusive right to disqualify incomplete proposals, waive irregularities, request additional information, modify scope, negotiate terms with one (1) or more of the Bidders, reject any proposals, and take any steps necessary to act in the Borough's best interest without penalty. The Borough reserves the right to add or remove services as it deems necessary. It is the Borough's desire to receive most information electronically; however, hard copies will not be disqualified.

The successful Bidder must be prepared to perform yearly analyses of the recruitment campaign results and recommend any necessary adjustments for each of the three remaining years of the grant. These recommendations and adjustments should be based on Key Performance Indicators (KPI) agreed upon between the Bidder and the Borough. Pricing options to perform these functions for the three remaining years of the grant shall be included in this RFP, and will be further discussed and agreed upon based on the yearly KPI findings and analysis, and the recommended adjustments to the campaign.

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

- Develop, design, coordinate, and implement the proposed marketing campaigns.
- Provide graphic design and content development for digital, video, print, and collateral material, and other recommended channels, as requested.
- Provide strategic campaign support, including: planning, development, and execution; multi-channel outreach; branded material development; media planning; and the scheduling and purchasing of advertising. Advertising mediums should include print, digital, radio, television, and other recommended channels.
- Provide market strategy and market research consulting, as needed.
- Provide media planning and management, as needed.
- Create a "marketable" BFD website address and centralized recruitment phone number.

Digital

- Provide website design, development, and content creation as needed to stand up the initial BFD site.
- Design, create, and deploy a BFD website to be housed on the Borough website.
- Review and update the Logan and Undine websites according to the established marketing/branding plan; and ensure that they will feed into the Borough/Bellefonte Fire Department webpage.
- Provide, develop, and launch a social media strategy and related content. Once developed and launched, the strategy and content will be handed off to the Borough. The BFD social media strategy will be analyzed yearly by the Bidder and the Borough.

Event Planning

- A marketing plan and budget should be included in this proposal for an annual “Recruitment Weekend” held on a date and location to be determined. Bidder should detail any experience developing campaigns for a single program crossing multiple audience demographics.
- Provide or design special event presentation material (banners, table covering, displays, etc.) that will further the BFD brand at small- and large-scale events.
- Provide necessary brand training and education to current members of the BFD (or others at the discretion of the BFD) related to the recruitment of volunteer firefighters.

Volunteer Recruitment Training

- Produce a video for on-line viewing that stresses the importance of current volunteers, reaches out to friends and family as a way of recruiting, and demonstrates and emphasizes the importance of peer-to-peer recruiting.

Data Collection and Reporting

- Collect, analyze, and report data relative to the reach and impact of the individual elements of the campaign, and provide guidance for adjustment to campaign strategies and platforms to optimize impact.
- Define Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), in collaboration with the BFD Recruitment/Retention Coordinator, to be assessed at specific, yet to be determined intervals, including annually, throughout the contract engagement.

Other

- Provide strategic marketing advice to the Borough to use with local government and business audiences that is persuasive in allowing their volunteer firefighter employees to respond to emergencies while on duty.

- Provide guidance on efforts to promote additional volunteer firefighter recognition to the public.

RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN STRATEGY, TACTICS AND MANAGEMENT

This component includes the overall development and management of all aspects of the marketing program, reporting and related tasks, and the coordination between key stakeholders within the Borough and BFD.

Marketing Materials and Video Production

This includes, but is not limited to, the following expected marketing products:

Video/Photography

- A 2-3 minute overall recruitment video showcasing the volunteer opportunities within the BFD with 15 and 30 second cut downs included.
- Two to three 60 second clips showcasing volunteer opportunities based on specific needs and targeted audiences such as high school/vocational and college students, military and healthcare professionals, etc. These concepts will be mutually developed between the successful Bidder and BFD stakeholders. Both 15 and 30 second cut down versions should be included.
- Short 30-60 second video profiles of existing BFD volunteers, 5-8 total.
- All videos should be formatted for social media as well as potential use on TV for commercials, PSAs, etc. Video production pricing shall include all rights, including music.
- Photography for use in campaign and recruitment materials, especially related to posters, billboards, banners, tri-folds, and print ads; combination of stock images (required use rights purchased at cost) and original photography is acceptable.
- Proposal should assume a 3–5-day overall production shoot to achieve the objectives outlined, although we look forward to overall proposals for specific approaches and timelines.

Offline Materials

- One or two sets of event materials to include design, production and shipping, as well as carrying case/holder for a 10x10 tent, table drape, pull-up and tabletop signs, and related supporting materials.
- Development and printing of small poster-size promotional handouts.

- Design and production of a BFD Prospective Member Guide, which is a PDF document outlining the opportunities, requirements, and process for joining the BFD. Pricing should include copywriting, editing, and printing. The BFD and its stakeholders will assist in content development.
- Original files (Illustrator, Adobe, Canva, etc.) must be provided.
- Development of other creative assets and marketing materials needed to support the overall campaign objectives.
- Recommendations should be made for what specific or general events the BFD should participate in to meet recruitment goals.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

Each proposal shall include the following:

1. Bidder profile: Company/individual names, headquarters location/address, contact information, agency size, financial stability, organizational structure, years in business, number of full-time and part-time employees, etc.
2. Proposed project team: Include related resumes/experience of staff expected to be assigned to the project, as well as name and details on all subcontractors or partner providers.
3. Related experience: Describe the related experience and expertise in providing services as listed herein, including but not limited to brand development, advertising and marketing development, video production, public relations, recruitment strategies for volunteer fire/EMS or related nonprofits/service organizations, and work samples for similar projects.
4. References: Provide at least three (3) references of similar work within the last three years.
5. Project understanding: Provide a narrative demonstrating a full understanding of all services and tasks required to successfully administer and complete this project.
6. Project approach/methodology: Provide a narrative fully and completely describing the proposal for the development of the BFD volunteer marketing plan and the approach/methodology proposed to achieve the objectives. Outline milestones, steps, approval points, meetings, and related key components. This should include a clear outline of the first 60-90 days, including needs from BFD and entities/individuals related to the project. A detailed proposed timeline to achieve the RFP deliverables should be included.
7. Fees/Costs: Provide a complete, detailed, and itemized description/breakdown of all fees, charges, and costs associated with the services provided. This should include all

licenses, copyrights, and any potential future maintenance fees after the contract ends. All costs associated with advertising should clearly break out the actual cost of marketing at the time of proposal submission (direct cost to third party platforms such as Facebook, Google, TV/Radio stations, etc.) versus cost to create, manage and provide reporting on same. Billing and payment terms are outlined in the BUDGET, BILLING and PAYMENT TERMS section of this RFP.

8. Other: The Bidder may include any other information deemed relevant to this RFP.

SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

The successful Bidder shall have significant experience in representing volunteer fire/EMS departments, non-profits or similar volunteer/service-oriented organizations in the areas of marketing strategy and execution, online advertising, public relations, recruitment, and video production.

- A. An authorized representative of the bidding agency shall sign proposals.
- B. All information requested in this RFP should be submitted.
- C. Failure to submit all requested information may result in the proposal being deemed as non-responsive.
- D. Proposals deemed non-responsive, incomplete, or lacking key information may be rejected in full by the Borough.
- E. Proposals should clearly respond to the Scope of Work, Proposal Format, Submittal Instructions in the order in which the requirements are presented.
- F. All pages of the proposal must be numbered, except for the cover page if applicable.
- G. Proposals should be organized and include all required information as described in this RFP.
- H. The Borough will assume no responsibility for oral instruction or interpretation of any language in this RFP.
- I. Questions submitted beyond the time specified in the terms and conditions may be left unanswered if sufficient time does not allow a response to all prospective Bidders.
- J. Any material change to the RFP will be submitted to all Bidders through issuance of an addendum.
- K. Any contact with any Borough representative, other than the Finance Director and the BFD Recruitment/Retention Coordinator, concerning this RFP are prohibited. Such unauthorized contact may disqualify a Bidder from this procurement
- L. Each Bidder shall be prepared to present evidence of their experience, qualifications and financial ability to carry out the terms of the contract.
- M. The Borough reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and waive all informalities. In the event the Borough rejects all proposals, the Borough may re-solicit.

- N. Failure to provide additional language or note specific exceptions to any requirements of this RFP or its terms and conditions, with the proposal submission shall be considered as an acceptance of all terms and conditions of any resulting contract from this solicitation.
- O. The Borough may arrange for discussions with Bidders submitting proposals for the purpose of obtaining additional information or clarification if needed.
- P. The Borough may make reasonable and necessary investigations to determine the ability of the Bidder to perform the work.
- Q. All proposals are due no later than April 28, 2021 as directed on Page 1 of RFP.

RFP/PROJECT TIMELINE

- RFP Advertisement Dates: March 28 and April 7, 2021
- Proposal Deadline: April 28, 2021
- Bid Opening: May 3, 2021
- Bid Review Period: May 3, 2021 to June 5, 2021
- Bid Awarded: June 7, 2021
- Notice of Award: June 8, 2021
- Notice to Proceed: June 21, 2021
- Project Start Date: June 21, 2021

The Borough reserves the right to adjust dates of review, selection and start dates based on the needs of the organization.

BUDGET, BILLING AND PAYMENT TERMS

Proposals must include proposed costs to complete the tasks described in the project scope and project description. Pricing should be listed for each of the proposed major task areas. Any subtasks required to complete the major tasks must also be described and priced. All costs and fees must be clearly described in each proposal. This is a “turn-key” project where the overall price must include all costs associated with completing the project.

The terms of payment will be as outlined below, unless mutually agreed upon terms are negotiated prior to award. Within 30 days of the award, 15% of the final project cost will be paid to the successful Bidder. Subsequent payments will consist of 35% at the midpoint of the project, 25% payment will be paid when the project is 75% complete; and the remaining 25% will be paid at the project’s completion. The midpoint and 75% milestones will be mutually agreed upon based on the overall agreed upon project timeline.

EVALUATION, SELECTION AND CONTRACT AWARD CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on overall presentation, demonstrated ability to achieve the objectives of the program, experience with similar programs, references, and related factors.

The Borough shall award the contract to the company(s) or individual(s) whose response best matches the needs, pricing and other factors. Price is not the sole determining factor – vendors may be chosen based on experience, their ability to provide unique services and other factors.

The Borough reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals that is deemed in the best interest of the Borough.

This procurement shall utilize competitive negotiation.

The Borough, at its sole discretion, reserves the option to conduct interviews, reference checks, request additional items or information of any or all respondents as it deems necessary to evaluate.

The awarding of any contract/agreement shall be done in compliance with the Borough's Grant Procurement Policy.

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria. To ensure consideration for this RFP, your proposal should be complete and include all of the following criteria:

- Overall Proposal Suitability: Proposed solution(s) must meet the scope and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner. The overall completeness of the proposal will be strongly evaluated.
- Organizational Experience: Bidders will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project specifically but not limited to experience in cinematography, developing marketing plans and performing market analytics. In addition, the qualifications and experience of the Bidder to accomplish the scope of this specific proposal based on education, experience and past performance will be strongly considered.
- Previous Work and Experience: Bidders will be evaluated on samples of their work as it pertains to the scope of this project. Samples of final work product (2-4 samples) should be included.
- Project Plan, Timeline and Anticipated Resources: Bidders will be evaluated on the anticipated resources assigned to this project (total number, role, title, experience), and the scope and breadth of the project plan and timeline.
- Value and Cost: Bidders will be evaluated on the cost of their solution(s) based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project.
- Technical Expertise and Experience: Bidders must provide descriptions and documentation of staff technical expertise and experience; specifically experience related to working with the fire and emergency service community or similar organizations.
- Project Management and Methodology
- Client References