

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
MARKETING SERVICES
FOR
THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT OF
OF THE DELTA WORKFORCE MARKETING INITIATIVE**

RFQ # 11-0116

1. INVITATION:

The Washington County Economic Alliance (hereinafter referred to as “WCEA” or the “Organization”) is soliciting Statements of Qualifications from qualified firms interested in providing Marketing Services relating to the Delta Workforce Marketing Initiative (hereinafter referred to as “DWMI”). The DWMI is a marketing initiative for the Charles W. Capps, Jr. Technology Center (hereinafter referred to as the “Capps Technology Center”) that will enable the Mississippi Delta workforce to access information regarding the workforce training programs/classes offered at the Capps Technology Center. Firms with relevant design experience and qualifications are encouraged to submit. The purpose of the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process is to identify the most qualified respondents for potential services. Following an analysis of the responses to this RFQ, a “short list” of firms will be created. These firms will be interviewed and evaluated by the Organization to determine the most qualified Marketing firm whose services will be most advantageous to the Organization and project, all factors considered. The firm ultimately selected by WCEA will provide full Marketing services for the design and/or administration of the proposed development as directed by the Organization.

The RFQ is available on our website (www.wceams.com) or by contacting the principal office at 342 Washington Avenue, Suite 201, Greenville, MS 38701, (662) 378-3141. **Please continue below for the complete Request for Qualifications document.**

2. RESPONSES:

The response to this RFQ shall be submitted in such form and quantity and at the location as is provided in this Request. The response must be submitted no later than November 18, 2016, 2:00 PM CST.

3. PROJECT DEFINITION:

A. Project Description

WCEA has been awarded a Rural Business Opportunity Grant by the Delta Regional Authority (hereinafter referred to as “DRA”) for the development of a marketing program for the DWMI. This grant received match funding from the Community Foundation of Washington County (hereinafter referred to as “CFWC”). Together, the funding associated with this marketing initiative will target rural communities, classified as high need, in all unemployment, underemployment, and underserved sectors. The DWMI will span the Capps Technology Center service area, which is comprised of small to medium-sized towns and cities within seven (7) distinct counties (Bolivar, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Sunflower, and Washington). Match funding from CFWC will be utilized solely in Washington County. Funding from DRA will be utilized in the additional counties to be served. Together, this funding/program will enable the dissemination of information regarding the multitude of training programs/classes offered at the Capps Technology Center, a leading Education and Training provider in the Mississippi Delta that houses the Workforce Education Division of Mississippi Delta Community College.

B. RFQ Schedule

The schedule is as follows:

- a) Issuance of RFQ –November 3, 2016, 8:00 AM CST.
- b) Receipt of Marketing Consultant Responses – November 18, 2016, 2:00 PM CST.
- c) Marketing Short List to be Interviewed – December 2, 2016, 8:00 AM CST.
- d) Selection of Marketing Consultant(s) – December 9, 2016 5:00 PM CST.

4. MARKETING SCOPE OF SERVICES:

The Marketing Scope of Services will be further defined during the interview/contract negotiations process. The final Scope of Services, together with the Marketing fee, will be included in the final executed Agreement.

In the broadest sense, the Marketing Firm shall serve as WCEA’s expert advisor for the development and implementation of marketing strategies for its DWMI program. The Marketing Firm will develop a marketing plan focused on achieving the DWMI goal of increasing awareness of the Capps Technology Center’s training classes/programs. Further, the selected Marketing Firm will create quarterly planning objectives and reporting that will ensure that the components of the program are managed properly and on budget. The firm will provide: traditional brand development and management; graphic design and content development for digital and print material; a social media strategy with implementation and management; website design and development; market research; and will manage public relations resources to accomplish the objectives as described in the marketing plan.

Preference will be given to agencies providing a broad range of services; subcontracts with local providers are acceptable.

5. PROJECT PARTICIPANTS:

Staff members and selected board members of WCEA, CFWC, and the Capps Technology Center (hereinafter referred to as the “Selection Committee”) will be responsible for developing a short list of approximately three (3) to five (5) firms to be interviewed for potential services. Those firms will be invited to make a presentation to the Selection Committee and answer any questions the Selection Committee may have regarding the firm and/or proposed services. Once the interviews are completed, the Selection Committee will rank the short list of firms in order of most advantageous to least advantageous. At such time, contract negotiations will begin between the highest recommended firm and WCEA, with the intent of executing a professional contract shortly thereafter. However, if the recommended firm and WCEA are not able to reach an agreement upon the terms and conditions of the engagement, WCEA has the right to end negotiations with that firm and either open discussions with the next highest ranked firm or issue a new RFQ altogether.

6. CRITERIA FOR SELECTION:

The purpose of this RFQ process, as previously stated, is to identify qualified firms that are the most capable of providing the described services. Each response will be ranked by the Selection Committee, in its sole and absolute discretion, using the below criteria and based upon the information presented in the response; the references provided by the respondent; the Organization’s knowledge from prior engagements, if applicable; independent background checks with previous clients and governmental agencies, not limited to the references provided by the firm; or any other information available to the Selection Committee. RFQ submittal should be organized to clearly address the following criteria which, among others, will be used in the evaluation of qualifications:

- a) Design philosophy and approach to design in general.
- b) Prior design service experience with projects of similar scale and complexity.
- c) Prior experience with non-profit clients and processes for projects of similar scale and complexity.
- d) Professional qualifications of individuals assigned to the Project.
- e) History of effective schedule and budget management for projects of similar scale and complexity.
- f) Use of processes that creatively engages the Organization and other stakeholders in all stages of design.
- g) Commitment to developing a marketing campaign that will drive measureable traffic to the Capps Technology Center for training

- h) Commitment to building greater awareness of the training programs/classes offered at the Capps Technology Center.

7. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

A. Submittal Documents – Format

Follow these instructions carefully:

In total, four (4) copies of the Submittals, including attachments, are required. All copies shall be spirally bound (or other semi-permanent binding method) to ensure that pages are not lost.

Submittals should use tabbed dividers followed by a section cover page, to separate Sections I through III. The envelope/package in which the Submittals are delivered must be clearly labeled on the outside with the Respondent's name and the project identification, "Delta Workforce Marketing Initiative – Qualifications Submittal for Marketing Services."

Submittals shall be delivered to the following addressee at or before November 18, 2016, 2:00 PM CST.

Washington County Economic Alliance
Delta Workforce Marketing Initiative
342 Washington Avenue, Suite 201
Greenville, Mississippi 38701

Late submittals will not be accepted.

B. Submittal Content: Each Submittal shall be organized in the following order:

Outside Cover and First Page:

Shall contain (i) the title, "Statement of Qualifications for Marketing Services Relating to the Delta Workforce Marketing Initiative", (ii) the name of the Respondent, and (iii) the Submittal date.

Table of Contents: Include a table of contents.

Transmittal Letter: Include a short Transmittal Letter. The Transmittal Letter shall:

- Summarize why the Respondent believes itself to be the most qualified;
- Contain the statement that to the best of the Respondent's abilities, all information contained in the RFQ submittal is complete and accurate;

- Contain a statement granting WCEA authorization to contact any previous client of the Respondent (or a Respondent's Team Member) for purposes of ascertaining an independent evaluation of the Respondent's or a Respondent's Team member's performance; and
- At least one copy of the transmittal letter must have the original signature of an officer of the principal responding firm.

Section I - Description of the Respondent

I-A Firm Description: Include a complete narrative description of the Respondent's firm (or firms if the Respondent is comprised of a team of firms).

Information should include:

- a) The Respondent's areas of Marketing specialization;
- b) Firm history;
- c) Honors and awards;
- d) Location of home and branch offices;
- e) Names of the principal officers of the firm;
- f) Identification of the major consultants if known.

I-B Organization Chart: Include a simple organization chart showing how the Respondent, if selected as the Marketing Firm, would organize its personnel for the project.

I-C Key Professionals: Identify the key members of your team that would be involved in the project and describe their area of expertise and what role they will perform in the Marketing team. Indicate their availability for this project schedule.

I-D Resumes Provide resumes of any person identified as a key professional. The resumes should contain the following:

- a) Name.
- b) Educational background.
- c) Employment history.
- d) Proposed role in the Project.
- e) An identification of other relevant projects in which the person has been involved and a name/phone number of a representative of any project cited that can be contacted for a reference.
- f) Other information you believe to be relevant.

Section II – Narrative (100 points total)

Set forth are the criteria on which the selection will be made. Your proposal should be organized to clearly address:

- a) Design philosophy and approach to design in general **(10 points)**.
- b) Prior design service experience with projects of similar scale and complexity **(20 points)**.
- c) Prior experience with non-profit clients and processes for projects of similar scale and complexity **(10 points)**.
- d) Professional qualifications of individuals assigned to the Project **(15 points)**.
- e) History of effective schedule and budget management for projects of similar scale and complexity **(20 points)**.
- f) Use of processes that creatively engages the Organization and other stakeholders in all stages of design **(10 points)**.
- g) Commitment to a marketing campaign that will drive measureable traffic to the Capps Technology Center **(5 points)**.
- h) Commitment to building greater awareness of the training programs/classes offered at the Capps Technology Center **(10 points)**.

Section III - Relevant Experience of the Respondent

III-A Summary of Relevant Projects Where the Respondent's Firm Was the Marketing Firm

List no more than five relevant projects. A relevant project is one which best exemplifies your qualifications for this Project:

- a) Name of project
- b) Type of company/client
- c) Project location
- d) Total project cost
- e) Project description
- f) Project delivery method
- g) Describe the services your firm provided
- h) Indicate which team members were actually involved in the project and specify their role.
- i) Provide a statement acknowledging if the project was completed on time/on budget.
- j) Provide a few illustrative photographs, pamphlet, renderings, etc. if available.

8. RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

WCEA reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject all firms, decline to proceed with selection of any candidates, to request additional qualifications, and to make inquiries as may be necessary to verify qualifications.

Nothing in this document shall require WCEA to proceed with design services.

9. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS, NOTIFICATIONS and INFORMATION

- a) A complete package of this RFQ, including attachments, can be obtained from WCEA's web site at www.wceams.com
- b) WCEA reserves the sole right to (1) evaluate the qualifications submitted; (2) waive any irregularities therein; (3) reject any or all Respondents submitting qualifications, should it be deemed in the best interest of WCEA to do so.
- c) The Organization is an equal opportunity employer. Women and minority businesses are encouraged to apply.
- d) The Organization makes reasonable accommodations for any known disability that may interfere with an applicant's ability to compete in the recruitment and selection process or the Firm's ability to perform the essential duties of the job. In order for the Organization to make such accommodations, the applicant must make known any needed accommodation.
- e) WCEA will welcome questions on or before November 14, 2016, 3:30 PM CST. regarding this solicitation. All questions shall be submitted in writing via email to the contact person listed below. Please allow at least two working days for responses to questions. All questions should be addressed in writing to:

William Coppage
Washington County Economic Alliance
342 Washington Avenue, Suite 201
Greenville, Mississippi 38701
E-Mail: wcoppage@wceams.com