

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL FOR MARKETING SERVICES

For the
IOWA WASTE EXCHANGE

SECTION A. - PURPOSE AND INTENT

Region XII Council of Governments (COG), on behalf of the Iowa Waste Exchange (IWE) is soliciting proposals from experienced entities for the planning, development, and execution of its marketing, advertising/publications and media relations program. The term of the contract will on or after January 1, 2024, with options to renew for one year on January 1, 2025, January 1, 2026, January 1, 2027, and January 1, 2028.

IWE is a service of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), administered by the COG under a statewide contract with IDNR in cooperation with three sub-contractors. IWE's mission is to reduce waste streams headed to the landfill from Iowa's industries through matching these wastes with others who may use it, encouraging and making connections for recycling, and education about wastes and possible re-use. IWE maintains a database of available matches and reaches out to companies individually through a variety of means including phone calls, emails, personal visits, trade shows, and social media.

IWE conforms to certain norms established by the IDNR. Marketing strategies established and implemented will be subject to IDNR oversight and guidance.

SECTION B. - DEFINITIONS

Bidder:	A qualified entity experienced in creating and implementing successful marketing/communications strategies for clients.
Contract:	The RFP, any addenda thereto, the bidders proposal, and the contractual agreement. The contract constitutes the agreement between Region XII Council of Governments (COG) and the successful bidder (contractor).
Evaluation Committee:	Internal review committee
Anticipated Award Date	December 15, 2023
Invoice:	Billing by contractor for services rendered, net 30 terms

SECTION C. - INFORMATION TO BIDDERS

Closing Date:	Friday, November 17, 2023 at 12:00 p.m.
Starting Date of Contract:	January 1, 2024

Completion Date: December 31, 2024, with options to renew for one year for four additional years.

Submission Address: Region XII Council of Governments
Attn: Rick Hunsaker, Executive Director
PO Box 768
Carroll, IA 51401-0768

SECTION D. - PROPOSAL PROCESS

CLOSING DATE. The closing date for receipt of responses to this Request for Proposal (RFP) is Friday, November 17, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. (Central Standard Time). Proposals shall be reviewed by the organization and the successful bidder will be notified on November 22, 2023. Formal interviews of finalists may or may not be conducted, at the COG's discretion.

ELIGIBLE BIDDERS. All eligible bidders must demonstrate the capacity to develop and execute the components of a successful statewide marketing strategy for the Iowa Waste Exchange including (but not limited to):

- Identification of target social media platforms best suited to IWE's goals and clients;
- Identification of events or trade shows where IWE attendance will best market its services;
- Development of a message and collateral materials targeted for specific audiences or platforms;
- Coordination with IWE Reps on identification and dissemination/promotion of success stories; and,
- Development of a public messaging strategy for limited budgets

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL One original shall be submitted. The proposal shall consist of the following parts as outlined in this RFP:

- Basic Data on Bidder -- Qualifications and Experience
- Proposal to Implement a Statement of Work
- Budget - Cost of Services, including any on-going costs.

LATE PROPOSALS. Proposals that do not reach the designated place, by the time and date specified will not be considered.

NONRESPONSIVE OR INELIGIBLE PROPOSALS. Proposals that do not conform to the requirements of this RFP may be deemed nonresponsive and not considered by the organization.

LIMITATION. This RFP does not commit Region XII COG, on behalf of IWE, to award a contract or to pay costs incurred by bidder in the preparation of a proposal to this RFP. The COG may accept a proposal other than the lowest bid, waive minor informalities, and award a contract based only on the written proposal without any discussions with bidder.

Region XII COG reserves the right to negotiate with any party responding to the RFP and to execute a contract on whatever terms it deems appropriate. In addition, the COG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals because of non-responsiveness to RFP requirements, insufficient funds, evidence of unfair bidding procedures, financial insolvency of Bidder, or in the best interests of the organization to be served.

PROPOSAL REVIEW. The COG's review team will initially review all proposals received for completeness. Completed proposals will be evaluated and rated by an internal evaluation committee.

The following criteria, not necessarily listed in order of importance, will be used to evaluate proposals:

- Bidder's project approach and methodology;
- Quality of project work plan;
- Description of the proposed deliverables;
- Project management and internal controls;
- Firm's and staff qualifications and experience;
- Business references; and
- Project costs.

These criteria are general in nature and may be used to develop a more detailed evaluation work sheet.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE. The period of performance will begin no sooner than January 1, 2023 and continue to December 31, 2023. In the event that the contractor selected through this RFP does not complete the contract, due to termination or any other reason, the COG reserves the right to negotiate with the next highest-ranking bidder(s) to complete the contract period without releasing an additional RFP.

OPTION TO EXTEND. Based on the availability of funds, effective contract performance and the needs of the COG, the contract may be extended for up to four (4) additional years, in one year increments.

OPEN RECORDS. Proposals submitted for this RFP are subject to the requirements of Iowa's Open Records law (Iowa Code chapter 22) and are available to the public. Some information in a proposal, such as legally recognized trade secrets, may be treated as confidential and withheld from public review. Bidders who desire confidential treatment of certain information contained in the proposal shall contact the COG prior to, or upon submission of a proposal, for information concerning the COG's procedures for making a request to treat a record as confidential.

NONDISCRIMINATION. The COG does not discriminate in the contract award process on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, color, national origin or disability.

CONTACT PERSON. Any questions concerning this RFP should be directed to Rick Hunsaker at (712) 792-9914, or by e-mail at rhunsaker@region12cog.org.

SECTION E. - BASIC DATA ON BIDDER - Qualifications and Experience

All proposals must include the following basic data about the bidder and any subcontractors:

- Name, telephone number and address, including e-mail address, of bidder.
- Name and title of individual authorized to bind the bidder and submit the proposal.
- Name, e-mail address and telephone number of person we may contact during the proposal evaluation process.
- Form of business - e.g. sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, Not-for Profit organization. If a non-Iowa corporation, indicate state of incorporation.
- Whether the business is owned or controlled by a parent corporation. If yes, provide the name and address of the parent corporation, nearest offices and managing office where the project staff assigned to this project will be located.
- A chart of the bidder's organization showing the level of organizational responsibility of key project staff member. Also chart how projects flow through the agency, using an example.
- A list of personnel to be assigned to this RFP, their functions in the project, length of tenure, and a detailed resume of each.
- Documented experience in performing similar projects by providing the COG a list of clients for whom the representative has provided similar services during the past three years. These clients may be contacted as references.
- Whether the bidder is a small business or certified disadvantaged business enterprise.

SECTION F. - PROPOSAL TO IMPLEMENT THE STATEMENT OF WORK

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Iowa Waste Exchange is a statewide business service of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources delivered by Region XII COG and the COG's subcontractors. IWE has been in existence since the late 1980s. IWE was originally delivered by a network of regional providers but now has just five IWE representatives (4.15 FTEs). In July 2024, plans call for there to be four full-time IWE representatives.

IWE representatives administer core services of the program, which focuses on matching wastes from one company to be inputs of another in an effort to decrease the amount of waste being landfilled. Waste available to be "matched" is identified by the IWE representatives (reps) through personal contacts with industries and are listed in a publically-available database. Contacts with industries are made through cold calls in person and on the phone, connections made at trade shows, and referrals from landfills, clients, or other partners. The reps track

success stories of matches made to the mutual benefit of the waste-generating business and the waste recipient. “Waste” includes everything one may find in a dumpster to marketable, usable products which are no longer of use to the business.

IWE tracks the number of contacts made and the amount of tonnage matched as success metrics.

In addition to this traditional role, IWE reps also work with K-12 educators to implement special projects, including waste sorts. IWE reps help landfills implement their five-year plans and recycling programs or their Environmental Management System (EMS) goals. IWE reps often assist clients with special events (e.g. Reusapalooza at the Iowa State Fair or various Earth Day events in communities or at universities). IWE reps also assist applicants with grant applications for IDNR funding streams including Derelict Building funds and the Solid Waste Assistance Program (SWAP).

Region XII COG and its partners have identified funding for the development and implementation of a multi-year marketing effort. The COG seeks to have a professional marketing firm develop a targeted marketing plan and implement strategies outlined in such a plan. The selected firm will become familiar with IWE and its role within IDNR in order to best devise a marketing strategy.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal should outline the bidder’s plan for the development and implementation of a successful marketing strategy and program for IWE. Specifically, the COG is looking for the project to address (at minimum) the following goals:

- Increase the number of contacts
- Increase the number of potential waste stream matches listed in the database
- Increase the profile of IWE among our targeted clients
- Disseminate and publicize success stories and ROI of the service

The Iowa Waste Exchange webpage, housed within the Iowa DNR, may have minimal ability to be altered.

Given the current time commitment of the IWE Reps and the anticipated decrease in FTEs, the COG is specifically interested in a marketing strategy which will be impactful to the program with minimal staff involvement in carrying out the plan (e.g. managing a social media presence). The COG understands the IWE Reps will need to work with the successful bidder, help build content, and be a part of development content.

The proposal should contain a thorough explanation of how the bidder expects to complete this project and deliver the components listed above. Bidders should include a timeline for the project stages and a means for measuring the results of specific marketing campaigns.

Bidders must submit a comprehensive proposal that addresses all of the areas identified throughout this RFP. Subcontractors may be utilized for various components if the bidder so wishes, as long as comprehensive information is provided on the subcontractor's qualifications and involvement in the project.

Bidders should include examples of past related work as a part of their proposal.

SECTION G. - COST OF SERVICES - BUDGET

The bidder must provide a detailed breakdown of the expected costs for this project and all related services, including rates for on-site services, reimbursements, and travel time.

SECTION H. – ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS

The successful bidder shall provide the COG with monthly activity reports relevant to the agreed upon scope of work. These reports shall be due by the 1st of the month. Said report to be attached to detailed monthly request for payment for services rendered.

Please sign and date the next page prior to submitting bid proposal.

ASSURANCES, REPRESENTATIONS AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The bidder hereby assures and represents with respect to this proposal that:

1. It possesses legal authority to submit this proposal; that a resolution, motion or similar action has been duly adopted or passed as an official act of the Bidder's governing entity or corporate board (if applicable) authorizing the submittal of this proposal, including all assurances, representations contained herein, and directing and authorizing the person signing below to act in connection with the application and to provide additional information as may be required.
2. It will comply with all applicable federal and state equal opportunity and affirmative action requirements.
3. That all statements and information made or furnished to Region XII Council of Governments in respect to this project are true and correct in all material respects. Bidder acknowledges that supplying any information determined to be false, misleading or deceptive will be grounds for disqualification from consideration.
4. It authorizes Region XII Council of Government to research the company's history, make credit checks, contact former and current clients of the company, and perform other related activities necessary for reasonable evaluation of this proposal.

Signature

Date

Type or Print Name

This form must be signed by an authorized representative of the bidder and submitted to Region XII Council of Governments along with bidder's proposal.