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Request for Proposals: NNPHI Project Firstline Communications Support

Deadline for Submission:
5:00 p.m. ET, March 19, 2021

Opportunity and Purpose

The National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) seeks an agency to provide communication services related to NNPHI's role in Project Firstline. Project Firstline, CDC's national training collaborative for infection prevention and control, is committed to preparing frontline healthcare workers and the public health workforce to protect themselves, their patients, and their communities from infectious disease threats. To learn more about Project Firstline, please visit ipc.nnphi.org and cdc.gov/infectioncontrol/projectfirstline.

NNPHI, in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Association of County and City Health Officials is responsible for engaging the public health workforce in Project Firstline. NNPHI seeks an agency to expand NNPHI's existing communications team capacity. The current team includes NNPHI communications staff and a small outside agency supporting NNPHI communications. The selected agency will help NNPHI enhance its Project Firstline communications plan, expanding upon existing efforts including a website microsite, email marketing, social media, an existing online community of practice, a podcast series, and several other tactics with the goal of moving from information dissemination to workforce engagement. NNPHI utilizes its existing communications agency for graphic design support and there may be some instances in which it would ask the additional agency to assist with graphic design. The successful respondent will submit a proposal as requested below, participate in a brief interview, and then finalize a service agreement contract with NNPHI. NNPHI anticipates awarding a time and materials contract with an overall project budget ceiling. NNPHI will request the agency bill NNPHI for hours worked each month. NNPHI will also require the agency to notify NNPHI when approaching the ceiling.

Eligibility

NNPHI is limiting this RFP to agencies able to demonstrate past performance with public health agencies and/or national public health organizations. It is essential the agency understands how to reach specific audience segments of the public health workforce.

Technical Expertise, Requirements and Tasks

Below is a list of the technical expertise and requirements NNPHI is seeking through this invitation, as well as a listing of projected tasks through December 31st, 2021. NNPHI anticipates slight refinement of tasks may occur but asks that any agency responding to this solicitation must be able to fulfill all technical requirements directly.

1. Communications Campaign Development

NNPHI develops communications plans for its larger programs such as Project Firstline. It is essential the agency responding demonstrates past experience developing communications campaigns and dissemination plans for public health program initiatives.

TASKS ANTICIPATED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31st, 2021:

- Review of program information related to Project Firstline
- Review and refinement of NNPHI's initial dissemination plan and communications activities for Project Firstline
- Assistance defining additional specific audience segments within the public health workforce for Project Firstline
- Developing strategies for engagement with specific public health audiences
- Participation in routine meetings with NNPHI's Communications team, NNPHI's Project Firstline team, and other ad hoc Project Firstline meetings as necessary

2. Email Marketing

NNPHI utilizes MailChimp for email marketing, sending out newsletters, campaigns and announcements related to convenings and/or program deliverables. It is essential the agency responding to this request have experience with email marketing systems, preferably with MailChimp. NNPHI seeks to expand the current email marketing campaign, in collaboration with the selected agency.

TASKS ANTICIPATED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31st, 2021:

- Based on the audience segments identified through the task in #1 above
 - Conduct analysis of NNPHI's current audiences in MailChimp relevant to Project Firstline
 - Analyze responses to NNPHI's Project Firstline email campaigns
 - Identify partner organizations with additional reach into specific public health audience segments (and quantify reach and tactics)
 - Plan outreach to the partner organizations to expand NNPHI's dissemination opportunities (i.e., development of a detailed outreach plan and tracking progress)
- Regular meetings with NNPHI's Communications team to review:
 - Development of new MailChimp campaigns
 - Analytics for MailChimp campaigns
 - Outreach to partner organizations

3. Graphic Design and Collateral Development

NNPHI has already initiated graphic design and collateral development work for Project Firstline with our existing communications agency (including website microsite, email marketing, and social media, etc). NNPHI anticipates requesting the agency supporting additional graphic design and collateral development as needed.

TASKS ANTICIPATED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31st, 2021:

- Developing engaging graphical elements for Project Firstline to be added to websites and/or social media and email marketing promotions.
- Routine meetings with NNPHI's Communications team to review graphic design project needs and status

4. Social Media

NNPHI utilizes Twitter and LinkedIn for social media, sending out tweets and episodic campaigns related to Project Firstline, program deliverables, and retweeting content from partner organizations. Currently NNPHI does not utilize Facebook or Instagram. It is essential the agency responding have past experience with Twitter and LinkedIn.

TASKS ANTICIPATED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31st, 2021:

- Reviewing and updating of NNPHI's Social Media Plan related to Project Firstline
- Analyzing current social media reach, platforms utilized, and opportunities for expansion
- Developing and publishing NNPHI Project Firstline content via social media platforms, in collaboration with NNPHI's existing communications team
- Weekly meetings with NNPHI's Communications team

5. Online Community of Practice

NNPHI currently maintains an online community of practice related to Project Firstline. NNPHI would like to analyze the community of practice to determine what is relative to the community as it relates to Project Firstline.

TASKS ANTICIPATED BETWEEN NOW AND DECEMBER 31st, 2021:

- Detailed analysis of the community of practice
- Strategy to establish more connections through the community of practice
- Strategy to promote more member engagement within the community of practice
- Establish a focus group/advisory group
- Weekly meetings with NNPHI's Communications team

Timeline

NNPHI anticipates the project period will begin in March 2021 and continue through December 31st, 2021. Extensions of this timeline may be possible depending on the availability of project funding and the performance of the agency.

Budget Ceiling

This portion of the overall project is currently budgeted at \$50,000.00.

How to Apply

Please submit your proposal to communications@nnphi.org no later than **5 p.m. ET, Friday, March 19th, 2021**. Appendix A includes a listing of elements NNPHI requests in response to this solicitation. After submitting your proposal, if you do not receive a confirmation of receipt by COB on March 19th, please email communications@nnphi.org to ensure receipt. **In fairness to applicants, NNPHI will not accept any proposals received after the deadline.**

Review and Interview Process

NNPHI will review and score applications based on the selection criteria noted below. **The finalists may be contacted to participate in a brief interview between March 22nd and March 26th.** Interviewees will be asked to share more about their experience and approach to communications. All applicants will be notified of their selection status by **March 31st, 2021**.

Selection Criteria

Selection will be based on the following criteria (note the point values for each criteria):

- Past Performance, Experience and Reputation **[50%]**
 - Qualifications and relevant experience of the proposed project management team and staff.
 - Quality of work on recently completed projects that are similar in scope to this request.
 - Fiscal Stability – Is the agency financially solvent?
 - The extent to which the respondent demonstrates an understanding of NNPHI’s needs and public health as a sector
- Costs **[40%]**
 - Reasonableness and affordability of cost of labor rates for individuals proposed for this contract.
 - Ability of agency to bill NNPHI monthly
- Approach and Availability **[10%]**
 - Approach to work is collaborative and incorporates necessary feedback loops.
 - Assurance of availability of internal team to meet NNPHI’s projected needs as articulated in this request for proposals.

Notice to Applicants

Please be advised that NNPHI reserves the right to modify the terms of the RFP with reasonable

notification to all interested parties. This RFP and any related discussions or evaluations by anyone create no rights or obligations whatsoever. NNPHI may cancel or delay this solicitation at any time at its own discretion. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding, the contract executed by NNPHI and the selected applicant, if any, will be the exclusive statement of rights and obligations extending from this solicitation.

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Appendix A: Requested Information

not required to be submitted in order

Legal Name of Organization:

Contact person for this application:

Email address:

Phone:

- 1) Interest and Capacity: Briefly describe your interest in this work, and provide a brief description of your agency's history, overall capacity, and expertise relevant to this project.
- 2) Demonstration of Experience: Describe and provide links to past experiences/projects that *demonstrate* your ability to complete the tasks as anticipated. Please include experience related to the categories of work outlined above. Also note your agency's ability to adhere to all federal government requirements for electronic information security and Section 508 compliance.
- 3) Approach to work: If you were awarded a contract to complete the tasks anticipated, what would your approach be for project management and prioritization? Please describe your agency's approach to project management
- 4) Past Performances and references: Please provide at least three brief past performance summaries and/or references from previous partners or clients to demonstrate successful project management and collaboration.
- 5) Staffing: Who will be the primary staff completing the work? List each staff person and describe their qualifications for this work, including experience. **Please include a copy of brief staff bios in your application.*
- 6) Cost Summary:
 - a. Please provide hourly rates for project manager and proposed team members
 - b. Please confirm your agency would bill NNPHI monthly.