



# Request for Proposals

*Communications and Public Relations*  
Seafood Economic Accelerator for Maine (SEA Maine)  
Communications Committee

Issue Date: 7/18/22

Closing Date: 8/15/22

## 1. SEA Maine BACKGROUND

The Seafood Economic Accelerator for Maine (SEA Maine) is an industry-led initiative committed to growing Maine's seafood economy by developing a roadmap and action plan that will ensure a vibrant, innovative and resilient marine economy. Funded by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Maine Technology Institute, and FocusMaine, SEA Maine brings together leaders from aquaculture and commercial fishing to identify strategies and targeted investments to help transition our heritage seafood economy into a modern engine for sustainable economic and job growth.

This cross-sector effort builds on substantial existing research in many areas of the seafood sector, and partners share their research to forge a new vision for the future of Maine's economy. Led by Curt Brown (Ready Seafood), the SEA Maine steering committee includes approximately 35 members located across the state including public and private entities including industry, associations, non-profits, academia, and research and development. Maine Development Foundation serves as the project manager for SEA Maine and will coordinate the RFP and selection process.

SEA Maine is a 3-year, \$2.1 million project, initiated in June of 2020, to strategically plan for the future of Maine's seafood economy. The results of our final report and the network we have established is intended to endure far into the future. Read more at [SEAMaine.org](http://SEAMaine.org).

## 2. Project Purpose and Description

**Purpose:** The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit competitive bids to

establish a coordinated foundation and structure for communications, marketing, and media relations related to the SEAMaine initiative.

### **Scope/Description:**

We encourage respondents to be creative and use their expertise to address the needs of the project in unique and innovative ways. In addition to the development of products related to this RFP, it is important that a system for evaluating impact is integrated. Recommendations for strategic benchmarks and evaluation metrics to monitor progress over time should be included in responses to this RFP. **Expertise and experience with the marine economy is required.**

- A. Facilitate a discovery process to identify public perceptions of the sector, target audiences, communications goals, and messages that would help satisfy those goals. Audiences may include legislators/policymakers, the general Maine “public,” marine resource industry members, sector employers, etc.
  - a. Include an assessment of what work has already been completed on public perceptions
  - b. Facilitate focus groups with target audiences (above) to develop and test a consumer-friendly message of opportunity that includes the economic and environmental benefit of growing Maine’s marine economy.
  - c. Develop a report of findings, themes, and key messages that can be utilized by project partners
  - d. Identify stories that illustrate the key themes and messages and incorporate those stories into communications.
  - e. This work will inform the communications materials that come after
- B. Provide assistance to the communications committee in identifying communications goals for SEA Maine, creating a unified voice, and developing a scope of work and goals to inform the communications strategy.
- C. Develop and implement a Communications Plan for this Phase I work.
- D. Work with SEA Maine Program Director and communications committee to create and keep up-to-date marketing materials and other communications vehicles up to date (i.e. One-pager, website, press outreach and releases). This is to include, at minimum, a quarterly review/update of materials and firm participation in monthly committee meetings to respond to time-sensitive communications needs.
- E. Develop and design the final SEA Maine Chart for the Future Report and manage the rollout campaign including announcements/press releases, media outreach, press conference, etc.

### **3. Instructions**

#### **Key Dates**

Any questions regarding the RFP should be submitted to the committee contact email address no later than **8/1/22**.

All responses to this RFP are due no later than **8/15/22 at 5pm (EST)**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be considered.

### **Committee Contact**

The following individual is the contact for the RFP:

Perri Williams, Program Coordinator, MDF

Email: [pwilliams@mdf.org](mailto:pwilliams@mdf.org)

### **Questions**

Suppliers are to direct any questions regarding the RFP content or process to the RFP contact. All questions should be submitted to the nominated email address during the RFP question period indicated above. The Committee may choose to convey responses to submitted questions to all suppliers so that each is equally informed.

### **Proposal Methods**

Suppliers must submit their response in the following method:

By email to: [pwilliams@mdf.org](mailto:pwilliams@mdf.org). The subject heading of the email shall be **SEAMaine Communications and Public Relations RFP Submission**. Only electronic copies are to be submitted in PDF format and Suppliers may submit multiple emails (suitably annotated – ex. Email 1 of 3) if attached files are deemed too large to suit a single email transmission.

### **Proposal Requirements**

This request for proposals represents the requirements for an open and competitive process under federal guidelines for procurement by competitive proposal. In competitive proposal procurement, the proposal that is most advantageous to the program is selected, considering both price and other factors.

Proposals will be received until **8/15/22 at 5pm (EST)**. Any proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. All proposals must be signed by an official agent or representative of the company submitting the proposal.

Proposals must be no longer than 5 pages including a project narrative that clarifies the proposed study method, an itemized project budget, a budget justification, an example study outline, a list of proposed resources and references to be used in the generation of the studies and a project timeline. Respondent qualifications and references may be submitted in addition to the 5-page limit and should include any experience in the marine economy. No overhead

charges will be allowed. Specific contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon the determination of the selected proposal. Bidders must complete the Fixed Price Summary Sheet (found below).

Suggested proposal outline:

- A. Detailed description of the methodology being proposed.
- B. Work program outline detailing:
  - a. Tasks to be performed.
  - b. When each will be completed (timeline).
  - c. Tentative allocation of person days by task.
  - d. Schedule of work products.
- C. Methods the Consultant proposes to use to manage the project and communicate with SEA Maine as to project progress and reviews.
- D. Identification of key personnel to be assigned to the project and their roles, with resumes of all key personnel.
- E. Budget: including hourly rates (inclusive of overhead and profit) for personnel or personnel categories.
- F. Data expected to be provided by SEA Maine.

If the organization submitting the proposal must outsource or contract any work to meet the requirements herein, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Additionally, all costs included in the proposal must be all-inclusive to include any outsourced or contracted work. Any proposals which call for outsourcing or contracted work must include a name and description of the organizations being contracted. All costs included in the proposal must be itemized to include an explanation of all costs and fees.

Please note that all deliverables will become public information.

Contract terms will be negotiated upon selection of the winning bidder for this RFP. All contractual terms and conditions will be subject to legal review and will include scope, budget, schedule, and other necessary items pertaining to the project.

Bidders must return a completed copy of form CD-512, with their bid. Available at [http://ci.noaa.gov/sites/lci/Documents/Forms/funding\\_forms\\_CD-512.pdf](http://ci.noaa.gov/sites/lci/Documents/Forms/funding_forms_CD-512.pdf)

## **Project Budget**

All proposals must include proposed costs to complete the tasks described in the scope of work. All costs and fees must be clearly described in the attached Fixed Price Summary Sheet. Proposals should include a breakdown of cost and hours for each task of the scope of work.

### **Bidder Qualifications**

All bidders should provide the following information as part of their proposal for consideration

#### **Personnel**

- a) Anticipated personnel you will assign to this project (name, title, summary of their academic background and professional experience) and description of what their role in this project will be and where they are located.

#### **Supplier Details**

- a) Supplier name (Trading and Registered), registered address.
- b) Details of supplier operating locations.
- c) Supplier ownership information.
- d) Relationships with any parent company (if applicable).
- e) Details of joint venture arrangements (if applicable).

#### **Supplier Capabilities and Experience**

- a) A description of the core supplier business, listing relevant case studies or examples (a maximum of three) that support this description. Where possible, include case studies that may relate to activities consistent with the Opportunity. Within necessary boundaries of confidentiality, please be as specific as possible.
- b) Additional services, products and works provided outside of your core business.
- c) Describe why you would be uniquely qualified to meet or exceed the requirements of this request.
- d) The sub-committee would appreciate experience from other states or countries with high-performing seafood economies
- e) If you have conducted similar projects, please indicate other factors not listed in the Opportunity that the committee should consider exploring to get the best result.

#### **Certifications and Awards**

- a) Details of all certifications held (ex. ISO 9001) including date of last certification and details of the certifying body (copies of certifications may be appended to your response).
- b) Details of any recent external corporate awards, including the awarding body, if relevant to the Opportunity.

**Other Information**

- a) Briefly address your suggested approach for each of the project areas
- b) Please provide 3 relevant references including contact information.
- d) Any further information/opportunities you believe the Committee may require.

**Suppliers to inform themselves**

The Committee has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the RFP is accurate; however, the Committee gives no representation or warranty as to the accuracy or sufficiency of the contained information.

**Costs of preparing the response**

All costs relating to the preparation and submission of a response are the sole responsibility of the supplier. The Committee shall not pay the supplier, wholly or in part, for its response.

**Confidentiality**

Except as required for the preparation of a proposal, suppliers must not, without the Committee's prior written consent, disclose to any third party any of the contents of the RFP documents. Suppliers must ensure that their employees, consultants, and agents also are bound and comply with this condition of confidentiality.

**Acceptance of these Conditions**

Suppliers, by submitting a response to this RFP, are deemed to have acknowledged and agreed to the conditions set out in this RFP.

### 3. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

#### Proposal Evaluation Criteria

All proposals received in advance of the solicitation deadline will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Overall proposal suitability (0-40 points): Proposal must meet the scope and needs included here and be presented in a clear and organized manner. Proposals that are action-oriented, and provide products and recommendations that can be quickly implemented will be scored higher.
- Expertise, experience and previous work (0-30 points): bidders will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project and previous projects completed successfully, as well as on their staff's expertise and experience.
- Value and cost (0-30 points): bidders will be evaluated on the cost of their analysis based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project.

Non-response bids or proposals (i.e., those with material deficiencies, omissions, errors, or inconsistencies) will not be considered.

No contracts shall be made with parties listed on the General Services Administration's List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurement or Nonprocurement Programs. All necessary steps will be taken to solicit participation of locally owned, minority-owned, female-owned, and small businesses.

Committee makes no obligations or undertakings in any way to:

1. go to tender; or
2. accept any RFP information received from suppliers; or
3. include suppliers responding to this RFP in any future tender invitation; or
4. any other commitment to suppliers whatsoever, including any intention to form a contract with any supplier for provision of the Opportunity.

The committee may choose to schedule one hour conference call meetings with suppliers to review the submitted information and provide the opportunity for the supplier to provide additional background relevant to this project.

A contract will be made in writing to the proposal which is most advantageous to the program considering the evaluation criteria specified. This will be the finalist with the highest score assigned by the review committee.

The committee may select project components from multiple proposals and seek to arrange opportunities for collaboration between suppliers.

Thank you for considering a response to this RFP. Please reach out to Perri Williams ([pwilliams@mdf.org](mailto:pwilliams@mdf.org)) with questions.

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APPENDIX A: FIXED PRICE SUMMARY SHEET

**Bidder:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instruction to Bidder:**

Complete all the sections below; failure to do so may disqualify the bids. If the inquiry is divided into more than one bid item, complete a "Summary Sheet" for each item.

a. **Labor Cost** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Estimated hours \_\_\_\_\_

b. **Materials** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. **Direct Expenses**  
**Sub-Contractors (add additional sub-contractors as necessary)**

Name  
Description of Work

• \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Travel** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Expenses**  
• \$ \_\_\_\_\_

d. In Person **Meetings** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE FOR THIS COMPONENT:**

\_\_\_\_\_

A fixed price summary sheet should be completed for each component A,B,C of the project.

**Resources that have inspired this RFP**

[www.seamaine.org/resources/](http://www.seamaine.org/resources/)

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