

## Communications RFP Questions

1. I am curious about your anticipated budget?

A. SEA Maine is a three-year, \$2.5m initiative funded through US Economic Development Administration. The project is scheduled to end in June 2023. Respondents are encouraged to provide a budget which meets the needs of the requested scope or work.

2. Will the content for the SEA Maine Chart for the Future Report be provided or are the insights and recommendations for the report itself the responsibility of the firm to be selected?

A. The intent of RFP Item E is to *layout and design the finished Chart for the Future Report once the insights, recommendations, and strategies are finalized.*"

3. You state this project is a 3-year project initiated in June of 2020. Does that mean all work proposed in this RFP is expected to be completed in May 2023?

A. Yes, all work should be completed by June 2023

4. In reference to the "recommendations for strategic benchmarks and evaluation metrics to monitor progress," - do you currently have any benchmarks utilized? If so, what works and what doesn't.

A. SEA Maine currently does not have any communications related benchmarks or evaluation metrics to monitor progress. We will look to the consultants for their expertise.

5. In terms of "experience with logistics and transportation studies," are there any specific requirements you're looking for?

A. The statement "experience with logistics and transportation studies" was included in this RFP in error. It should read "experience working in the marine economy is required." The RFP has been updated online.

6. Regarding "No overhead charges will be allowed," can you please elaborate?

A. Overhead costs cannot be included in the budget. Overhead costs are expenses required to run a business and not directly related to the service and/or product.

7. For ongoing work with committees, are meetings done in person or virtually? How often do the current committees meet?

A. Virtually via Zoom on a monthly basis.

8. Is it the desire of the industry-led initiative to have any paid external media be a part of the communications plan?

A. Respondents should prepare proposals which meet the needs of stated scope of work and reflect the respondents experience and expertise in making appropriate recommendations.

9. What has SeaMaine done for ongoing communications thus far?

A. SEA Maine has had branding work (inclusive with a branding guide), a website redesign, and some communications assets (newsletter template, letterhead, and a PowerPoint Template) created. All of the work was done by Pulp & Wire after an RFP process last year. SEA Maine has published two quarterly newsletters in 2022 and as necessary, has done limited press releases.

10. What is the time period for this project?

A. All aspects of the project should be completed by June 2023.

11. RFP states "Develop a report of findings, themes, and key messages that can be utilized by project partners" Question - who are considered "project partners"?

A. Project partners include any stakeholders and committee members associated with SEA Maine. This includes individuals, organizations, and businesses who participate in SEA Maine committees or project management (MDF, MTI, FocusMaine).

12. Media rollout planned for when?

A. Please refer to Question 10.

13. Has the communications committee narrowed the focus of the public perception study? Public perceptions of the "sector" will differ immensely across species and cultivation techniques. Consider land-based aquaculture versus lobstering versus kelp harvesting. Perceptions of the industry broadly will

also affect the ability across the industry to attract new workers. What are the goals of the perception study or is this part of the early work of the consulting team?

A. This is part of the early work of the consulting team.

14. When do you anticipate awarding the RFP?

A. Submissions will be accepted through 8/15/22 and the committee will start the review process. We anticipate work to begin in early fall 2022.

15. Of the \$2.1 million budget, over three years, has the annual budget for communications and public relations been determined? If so, what is it? Are there any budget figures for this initial phase? Additional phases?

A. Please refer to question 1.

16. Other than the Program Director, are there any dedicated staff assigned to support communications and public relations? Is the communications committee a “working” committee or advisory only?

A. SEA Maine project management includes both a Program Director and a Program Coordinator who will be the main points of contact for consultants, along with the Communications Committee. The Communications Committee will serve an advisory role for this work and the consultants are expected to implement all aspects of the communications plan.

17. Other than what is showcased on the website, do any other marketing assets exist?

A. Please refer to question 9.

18. Have you worked with any other Communications & PR Firms? Design firms?

A. SEA Maine has worked with a marketing/design firm.

19. Will the SEA Maine Program Director require media training?

A. The selected firm will be expected to implement all aspects of the communications plan.

20. What are the start / end dates for Phase I?

A. Please refer to question 10.

21. What are your required time frames for drafting and finalizing the Communications Plan for Phase I?

A. Please refer to question 10.

22. What is the public delivery date for the SEA Maine Chart for the Future Report?

A. Please refer to question 10.

23. Will you accept a line-item budget versus the summary sheet, or would you prefer both?

A. EDA requirements for submissions are outlined in the RFP. Any additional information is up to the discretion of the respondent.

24. Do you need a breakdown of hourly rates by position or strictly the fixed pricing?

A. Please refer to question 23.

25. How long is the contract? Is there opportunity for renewal?

A. The contract will be through June 2023. Opportunity for renewal or further work is unknown.