

Marketing Campaign and Public Relations
Dutchess County Local Development Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Proposals Due

December 31, 2021

5:00 p.m.

SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO:

SARAH LEE
DUTCHESS COUNTY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
3 NEPTUNE ROAD
POUGHKEEPSIE, NY 12601

PHONE: (845) 463-5400

EMAIL: sarah@thinkdutchess.com

INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

Read all documents contained in the proposal specifications

- Sealed proposals for Marketing Campaign and Public Relations will be received by the Dutchess County Local Development Corporation (DCLDC), 3 Neptune Road, Poughkeepsie, New York 12601, on or before 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 31, 2021. Specifications and proposal forms are attached hereto.
- Proposers are responsible for submitting their proposals to the appropriate location at or prior to the time indicated in the specifications. **No proposals will be accepted after the designated time or date indicated in the proposal specifications.** It is recommended that proposals be submitted in advance, at least one day prior to the specified date and time to allow for a timely receipt. Delay in mail delivery is not an exception to the receipt of a proposal.
- **The following forms are necessary to be submitted as a proposal, as well as any additional forms requested in the detailed specifications:**
 1. **CS-1 – Proposal form/price page(s)** Note: some bids may include a separate Bid Proposal Form. Such exceptions will be noted in the proposal specification.

It is not necessary to submit your copy of the technical specifications with the proposal. They should be retained by the proposer for their records.

- Proposers must submit one (1) original copy of their proposal. All proposals must be filled out in ink, or be typewritten. Proposals submitted in pencil will be rejected as unresponsive. Proposals which have been corrected by white out or cross out, and have not been initialed and/or dated will be rejected as unresponsive.
- Should the proposer find discrepancies or omissions in the specifications he/she shall notify DCLDC at once. DCLDC will not assume responsibility for any oral instructions, or interpretations of meaning of the specifications or other contract documents to any proposer by any person or persons.
- Written questions and inquiries concerning this Request for Proposals shall be submitted to Sarah Lee at sarah@thinkdutchess.com **on or before the date and time stated in the bid documents.** **Verbal questions will not be entertained.**
- References in the specifications to a particular trade name, manufacturer's catalog or model number are made for descriptive purposes to guide the bidder in interpreting the type and quality of materials or supplies or nature of work desired. Such descriptions should not be construed as excluding bids on other types of materials and supplies or for performing the work in a manner other than specified, providing that the materials and supplies and manner of performing the work offered are of equal quality to that specified and equally acceptable to the DCLDC for its purposes. Exceptions must be clearly stated. DCLDC will determine equal products or services.

- DCLDC guarantees no minimum or maximum purchase.
- Proposers who are required to adhere to the prevailing wage schedule shall obtain and maintain a current schedule from the New York State Department of Labor for the entire term of the contract. The County or DCLDC may audit adherence to this schedule at any time during or after the contract period.
- DCLDC reserves the right to reject all proposals, parts of all proposals, or all proposals for any one or more supplies or contractual services included in the proposed contract, when such rejection is in the best interest of DCLDC.
- DCLDC reserves the right to award to single or multiple vendors, in whole or in part, by item, by class, by category, or to establish primary/secondary contracts, whichever DCLDC deems to be in the best interest of DCLDC.
- The contract will be awarded to the **RESPONSIBLE PROPOSER** best meeting the needs of the DCLDC, based on, but not limited to:
 - a. Approach to the project.
 - b. Experience in meeting the needs of the project (examples should be submitted with the proposal).
 - c. Experience working with other entities (references must include client name, contact person, phone number and description of project).
 - d. Ability to provide services in a timely manner, meeting established project deadlines, including a strategy of key activities and ability to meet target schedule.
 - e. Proposed cost.

And who has demonstrated judgment and integrity, is of good reputation, experienced in his work, whose record of past performance in the trade is established as satisfactory, and whose financial status is such to provide no risk to DCLDC in its contractual relations.

- Upon acceptance of any proposal, the successful proposer shall execute a contract, if applicable, in accordance with the specifications, with DCLDC.
- A contract shall not be assignable by the contractor in whole or in part without the written consent of DCLDC.
- DCLDC reserves the right to allow other governmental entities, to purchase any goods and/or services awarded as a result of this proposal. However, it is understood that the extension of such contracts are at the discretion of the vendor and the vendor is only bound to any contract between DCLDC and the vendor. DCLDC shall have no responsibility in the dealings between the vendor and any other governmental entity other than DCLDC.
- A contract shall be deemed in force only to the extent of appropriations available for the purchase of such articles or services. DCLDC's extended obligations on those contracts that

envision extended funding through successive fiscal periods shall be contingent upon actual appropriations for the following years.

- **GRIEVANCE AND PROTEST PROCEDURES:**

1. Any protest to DCLDC's consideration of any bid must be submitted in writing and received by DCLDC no later than five (5) calendar days after the bid award. A written reply to the protest will be sent to the protesting bidder by DCLDC.
2. The protest must contain:
 - Identification of the statute or procedure that is alleged to have been violated
 - A precise statement of the relevant facts
 - Identification of the issues to be resolved
 - Aggrieved party's argument and support documentation

Any notice of protest received after the deadline will not be considered.

- **NOTE: VARIATIONS AS STATED IN THE BID SPECIFICATIONS TAKE PRECEDENT OVER THIS INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION SECTION.**

**DUTCHESS COUNTY LOCAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(D/B/A THINK DUTCHESS)
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING SERVICES**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Dutchess County Local Development Corporation d/b/a Think Dutchess is seeking to retain one or more experienced public relations and marketing firms to provide a mix of marketing and public relations services. The goals and strategies are broadly outlined below however, the overall goals are to promote Dutchess County as a leader in economic development, market Dutchess County business and economic development assets through media and public relation strategies, to advise Think Dutchess on press and public relations and to assist Think Dutchess in broadening awareness of its mission and work both to an external and internal audience.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Dutchess County Local Development Corporation (DCLDC) is an independent public authority created by the Dutchess County Legislature and funded partially by Dutchess County that works to retain, expand and attract businesses through public-private partnerships, leveraging funding and support of Dutchess County companies to result in increasing non-residential tax revenues and providing increased quality and diverse job opportunities for Dutchess County residents.

In 2016, DCLDC doing business as Think Dutchess embarked on a marketing and brand awareness campaign to bring awareness of the business assets of Dutchess County. While this marketing campaign has gained some momentum and seen some exciting results, it is time to refocus some of the efforts to address an internal marketing campaign while continuing to build on the external marketing successes by focusing on high performing marketing initiatives and improve on the return on investment.

The successful bidder will use public relations and marketing services to help Think Dutchess accelerate the effort to brand and market Dutchess County as a premier business location. The following outlines the strategic initiatives of the marketing campaign and the scope of services to be performed by the selected contractor.

3.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

CATEGORY: MEDIA RELATIONS

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Engage in an earned media campaign(s) (not paid advertising) to increase reach and awareness of Dutchess County advantages and assets relating to business and key industry sectors.

Deliverables

This strategy would include content creation and distribution of new announcements to tier one, two and three state, national, international and industry trade media regarding business investment, partnerships, expansions and related news. Related tasks would include: drafting press releases, and news items as appropriate and relevant.

- **Press Trips:** Develop and execute hosted press visits to the region to showcase the business advantages and lifestyle assets of Dutchess County. Collaborate with key partners and businesses to develop customized itineraries with interviews and key messaging for each visit.
- **Proactive Media Relations:** Develop a series of quarterly pitch ideas to proactively distribute to most-wanted media; target reporters within key sectors and business beats, and work aggressively to gain earned media placements reflecting positively on Dutchess County.
- **Reactive Media Relations:** Be timely and responsive in handling incoming media requests for information or interviews; work to identify key spokespeople, talking points, and appropriate briefing documents as needed. Work collaboratively with regional partners to capitalize on media reach.

CATEGORY: DIGITAL MARKETING

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Continue to build Think Dutchess' digital brand and resources to increase awareness and lead generation activity for both business attraction and business retention and expansion efforts.

Deliverables

- **Social Media Content Creation:** Research and create engaging, positive daily content to promote Dutchess County online, specifically as it relates to business, economy and industry. Position Think Dutchess Alliance for Business as an

authoritative and accurate brand for regional economic development news.
Establishment of KPIs and timely, required reporting of results from campaigns.

- **Digital Advertising:** Utilize strategic digital marketing campaigns, which includes a combination of geo-targeting, paid search and LinkedIn ads, to drive key decision-makers, site selectors and other target audiences to visit www.ThinkDutchess.com.

CATEGORY: COLLATERAL AND MARKETING MATERIALS

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Create content and/or collateral as a vehicle to leverage Think Dutchess messaging to key audiences.

Deliverables

- **Video:** Promote original video content that enhances Think Dutchess' digital marketing strategies and allows for future engagement with key audiences, such as site selectors, business owners, entrepreneurs and more.
- **Other:** Continually review existing collateral materials to determine effectiveness and relevance and eliminate outdated materials and revise others as needed.

CATEGORY: SITE SELECTOR/BROKER OUTREACH

STRATEGY STATEMENT

Assist Think Dutchess to develop relationships with location advisors and commercial/industrial real estate brokers to maintain a presence on project RFPs and other location and expansion decisions.

Deliverables

- **In-Person Meetings:** Use and work with business development staff to schedule one-on-one and group meetings with this audience, utilizing appropriate marketing collateral created by Think Dutchess.
- **E-Newsletters:** Draft and distribute timely news items for this audience in a clear, concise, branded Think Dutchess e-newsletter. Separate this e-newsletter from existing monthly e-newsletters focused on regional business audiences.
- **Industry Events:** Work with Think Dutchess Staff to participate in trade shows and industry events related to key target sectors and geographic markets, utilizing a range

of marketing and PR tactics, from setting up interviews to promoting related industry advantages on social media, using branded event hashtags.

4.0 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

The following **minimum requirements** must be met by all firms which respond to this RFP:

- Firm must have a minimum of five years economic development experience
- Firms or staff must have two years marketing and promotion experience in the New York Metropolitan Area
- National and International marketing and promotion experience beneficial
- Firm must have proven editorial results

5.0 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Proposals should be straightforward with a concise description of the vendor's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the Request for Proposals, as outlined herein. This section outlines the information that **must be included in all proposals**. Please provide the information using the same number sequence and in the same order as the items in this section

5.1 Transmittal Letter

Each response to the RFP should be accompanied by a letter of transmittal not exceeding one (1) page that summarizes key points of the proposal and which is signed by an officer of the vendor authorized to commit the vendor to the obligations contained in the proposal. The transmittal letter should also include a phone number, fax number and e-mail address for the vendor's primary contact person.

Proposal should include evidence of the firm's ability, experience, capacity, relationships and results.

5.2 Pricing Proposal:

Provide a detailed description of cost elements for each task and deliverables including:

- A lump sum fee based upon a one year contract with payments made monthly. This contract is renewable every year (but not exceeding a total of three years). A staffing schedule would be included for all services to be performed.
- Unusual conditions that might affect cost; and
- Estimated reimbursable costs.

5.3 Work Plan:

Provide a detailed work plan that describes how proposed services will meet the scope of services and tasks and deliverables described in Section 3 of this RFP.

5.3 Vendor Background and Experience:

Provide a clear demonstration of the vendor's background and prior experience. Think Dutchess reserves the right to contact these organizations for reference purposes.

5.4 Servicing Office

Name, address of the office which will provide the services requested, telephone number, fax and website if applicable. Provide a general description of the proposing vendor's business, including size, number of employees, primary business and other business or services offered.

Include a list of the most significant engagements (maximum of 5) performed in the last five years that are similar to the engagement described in this RFP provide contact information including telephone and email for each client.

5.6 Leadership Team

Resumes for all executives, partners and managers who would be assigned to this engagement. Provide information on the experience of each proposed consultant, especially as it relates to the performance of this engagement. Provide as much information as possible regarding the experience of the specific staff to be assigned to the engagement.

6.0 EVALUATION PROCESS

Proposals submitted will be evaluated by a review committee. The review committee shall review and evaluate each of the proposals using the criteria described below under Evaluation Criteria (Section 7.0). Each reviewer will rank each proposal according to the Criteria. The reviewers will then convene to review and discuss these evaluations.

Think Dutchess reserves the right to seek clarification of information submitted in response to the RFP and/or request additional information during the evaluation process.

All selected finalists may be required to provide an oral and/or written presentation to Think Dutchess.

7.0 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Every proposal submitted will be reviewed in accordance with the following criteria:

7.1 Compliance with requirements as outlined in these specifications

7.2 Qualifications and experience

7.3 Methodology and approach

7.4 Cost

8.0 AWARD

Think Dutchess reserves the right to accept any submittal and/or parts thereof and/or to reject any of all submittals if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Think Dutchess.

9.0 CONTRACT TERMS

The selected proposer will be required to enter into a formal contract agreement with Think Dutchess (The Dutchess County Local Development Corporation).

The contract term will begin upon successful execution of the formal contract and end no later than twelve months after, with the option to renew annually for up to three years, if mutually agreed upon between Think Dutchess and the awarded proposer.

10.0 OWNERSHIP OF WORK PRODUCT

All work products including digital forms produced or created by the proposer as a result of or related to the performance of work or services under this RFP proposal will be property of Think Dutchess/DCLDC.

11.0 QUESTIONS

Written questions and inquiries concerning this Request for Proposals shall be submitted to Sarah Lee at sarah@thinkdutchess.com no later than December 24, 2021 by close of business day.

Answers to the submitted questions will be posted on the Think Dutchess website on or before September 28, 2018 by close of business: www.ThinkDutchess.com

PROPOSERS SHOULD CHECK THIS WEBSITE FOR ADDENDA BEFORE SUBMITTING THEIR PROPOSAL. ADDENDA MAY INCLUDE SIGNIFICANT CHANGES TO THE SPECIFICATIONS.

12.0 **SUBMISSION**

12.1 All proposals must include:

- Documentation to completely satisfy Section 4.0 and Section 5.0
- Completed and signed form CS-1 Proposal Form;

12.2 One (1) original must be sent to:

Sarah Lee
Dutchess County Local Development Corporation
3 Neptune Road
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

Proposals must be received no later than Friday, December 31, 2021