



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

HBLB RFP 2019-002

Issued: December 7, 2018

“The Home Builders Licensure Board seeks proposals from professional firms to assist with the development, implementation and execution, and tracking of an advertising campaign to increase public awareness of the HBLB’s existence and function, including but not limited to the requirement to hold a license, what the license looks like, and how to find and verify a licensee.”

Alabama Home Builders Licensure Board

445 Herron Street

P.O. Box 303605

Montgomery, AL 36130

Office: (334) 242-2230

www.hblb.alabama.gov

NOTICE OF NEED OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

TO: Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations Firms

FROM: J.R. “Chip” Carden, Jr., Executive Director

RE: Statewide Advertising Campaign

Background

The State of Alabama Home Builders Licensure Board, (hereinafter “the HBLB”) is a state agency with the statutory responsibility of licensing and regulating residential construction and enforcing state laws related to residential construction. More information about the HBLB may be found at www.hblb.alabama.gov. The HBLB has determined the need and seeks professional services from advertising, marketing and public relations firms on the referenced project. The need for such services is directed by the HBLB Strategic Plan goals as adopted by the Board, July 2017. Attached is a “Notice of Need of Professional Services,” containing the abbreviated scope of work and evaluation items. Firms expressing interest should be fully capable of providing stated scope of work and tasks for desired outcome.

Notice of Need for Services

Notice is hereby given that the Alabama Home Builders Licensure Board, 445 Herron Street, Montgomery, Alabama 36104, is requesting submittal of interest from all firm(s) interested in performing work outlined in the following scope of work.

Scope of Work

The HBLB’s adopted Strategic Plan Goal #2 is to “Increase Public Awareness.” The firm will assist the HBLB with the development, implementation and execution, and tracking of an advertising campaign to increase public awareness of the HBLB’s existence and function, including but not limited to the requirement to hold a license, what the license looks like, and how to find and verify a licensee. The firm will be tasked to develop, write and produce advertising messages for broadcast, digital/online, and social media mediums. The firm will be tasked to use its expertise and knowledge of advertising and marketing to identify, secure and place advertising messages in strategic and appropriate broadcasting, advertising and social media mediums. The firm will be tasked to track, interpret, and measure results of data gained from the advertising campaign to be used in advertisement placement during the select campaign and for future advertising. The HBLB shall maintain legal proprietary interest in the messaging theme developed and all related supporting materials.

The advertising campaign will be three to four months in duration. The full scope of the HBLB Advertising Campaign is budgeted in the 2019 fiscal year for \$50,000.

Task One: Develop, Write and Produce Advertising Message

The selected Vendor will be expected to develop and/or expand upon the theme “ask to see the card,” as a marketable message for the HBLB in order to raise public awareness of the statutory purpose of the HBLB in effort to better protect consumers. The use of creative liberty with the stated theme is possible only with approval from HBLB.

The selected Vendor, upon development of marketable message, will be expected to write and coordinate the production of the advertising message appropriate for broadcast (television and/or radio), digital/online, and social media mediums. Included within the production task will also include advertising message(s) for general public awareness and also specific targeted messaging related to storm disaster response needs.

Task Two: Identify, Secure and Place Advertising Messages

The selected vendor will be expected to identify, secure and place advertising messages in strategic and appropriate broadcasting, advertising, and social media mediums. Payment of costs for the purchase and placement of advertising message will come from total budgeted for campaign as awarded in the contract.

Task two will also include assisting the HBLB staff with the development of a proactive social media presence to complement messaging and consumer public awareness beyond the duration of the targeted advertising campaign.

Task Three: Tracking and Interpreting Data from Advertising Campaign

The selected Vendor will be expected to track and interpret data gained from the advertising campaign to include views, likes, sharing, social media comments, survey response if applicable and any other information gathering tools appropriate or used to complete task. The selected Vendor will measure the effectiveness of their approved campaign. Tracking will be done throughout the duration of the advertising campaign and used for adjustment and specific advertisement placement during the select campaign and for future advertising.

Proposed Budget

Vendor must include with its proposal a detailed, itemized budget within the specified areas: (1) development and creation of advertising message, (2) production of advertising message in selected mediums, (3) securing/purchasing advertising space within select mediums, and data tracking. All costs included must additionally be broken down and itemized with an explanation. All costs must be all-inclusive of any outsourced or subcontracted work.

Vendor shall propose a price that reflects any business risk it perceives in the way the proposal specifications are stated.

Vendor shall not anticipate nor rely on clarifications, discussions, redefinition, or further negotiations with the HBLB after the contract award to adjust the price contained in its proposal for the work required by the RFP. Any efforts to limit, qualify, caveat, restrict, or place conditions upon the price being proposed shall be considered non-compliant and shall result in the proposal being rejected as non-responsive.

Vendor's proposed budget will be subject to contract negotiations; however, any awarded contract will not exceed the amount of any proposed budget under any circumstances.

Data-Sharing and Confidentiality

Some of the HBLB's file material is statutorily privileged and not subject to public inspection pursuant to Alabama Code Section 34-14A-8.1. During the term of any contract awarded, the Vendor shall be responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the Board's privileged materials.

Statement of Work

A response to this inquiry should be in the form of a letter-type response that addresses the points listed in the evaluation portion of the need for services. This response should be limited to a maximum of five (5) pages. Failure to receive such letter by the deadline indicated will be considered as "no interest."

In its proposal, Vendor must adequately address each of the following:

- 1) Please provide a summary of services to be provided by Vendor that meet the above requirements, highlighting any of Vendor's strengths and identifying any known weakness or inability to provide part or all of the services requested (whether mandatory or preferred).
- 2) Describe Vendor's experience relative to providing required services.
- 3) Identify all personnel that will contribute, in any way, to services provided by Vendor, including whether positions are full-time or part-time and/or contract or subcontract arrangements, providing job descriptions for those positions.
- 4) Provide the earliest "start date" by which Vendor could begin providing services under any executed contract (irrespective of requisite state government approvals and processes by which to obtain them). Identify potential barriers or anticipated delays.
- 5) Provide a detailed budget for Vendor's planned services, as stated above.

Form and Content of Proposals

One (1) original paper or hard copy of the proposal must be submitted along with six (6) paper or hard copy proposals, including copies of completed/notarized required documents. Vendors must additionally submit an electronic copy of responsive proposals and all attachments on a USB drive. The proposal package must be sealed and properly labelled with Vendor's name, proposal opening date, and RFP name. Failure to submit the required number of copies in this requested format will prevent a vendor's proposal from being evaluated.

An authorized representative of Vendor must sign the original proposal with any changes made in ink in all required places.

If the organization submitting a proposal intends to outsource or subcontract any work to meet the requirements contained herein, such must be clearly stated in the proposal and details must be provided, including a name and description of the organization(s) being contracted. All forms and requirements of Vendor per this RFP shall equally pertain to any subcontractor(s).

Proposals submitted by "Express/Overnight" services must be in a separate sealed inner envelope/package and identified as stated above. Packages hand delivered must also be sealed and labeled.

Vendor's proposal must include the complete name, address, mailing address, e-mail address and direct telephone number of the person the Board should contact regarding the proposal. Vendor must use and complete the enclosed "Coversheet" (see RFP Appendix A). Vendor's proposal must include an original signature and notarization on the enclosed Vendor Authorization Form to Submit Proposal (see RFP Appendix B) and Vendor Disclosure Statement (see RFP Appendix C), both of which must be returned with the proposal. The "Proposal Box" must be checked on the Vendor Disclosure Statement submitted along with Vendor's proposal. {Please note: a separate Vendor Disclosure Statement (with the "Contract Box" checked) must be completed by the successful vendor to accompany any executed contract.}

Also, if vendor so prefers, an electronic copy of the Vendor Disclosure Statement is available through the Alabama Attorney General's website: <http://www.ago.state.al.us/Page-Vendor-Disclosure-Statement-Information-and-Instructions>, along with additional directions for completion. A copy of the successful Vendor's completed disclosure statement shall be filed with the Board and the Alabama Department of Examiners of Public Accounts and submitted to the Contract Review Permanent Legislative Oversight Committee. Any disclosure statement filed pursuant to Alabama Code Section 41-16-85 will be public record.

If applicable, a Corporate Acknowledgment Statement must be completed and included with the proposal (see RFP Appendix D). If not applicable, Vendor must include an explanation of inapplicability with the proposal. A copy of the vendor's Certificate of Authority (issued by the Secretary of State of Alabama) must be included as an attachment to the Corporate Acknowledgement Statement with the proposal.

Vendor will complete an “Immigration Status” form (see RFP Appendix E). Vendor specifically warrants by submitting a proposal that Vendor does not and will not knowingly employ, hire, or continue to employ an unauthorized alien within the State of Alabama. Vendor must complete and return the attached “Certificate of Compliance” (see RFP Appendix F) and provide documentation establishing enrollment in the e-Verify program. Specifically, Vendor must provide a full copy of its e-Verify MOU (see RFP Appendix G for sample) along with its proposal.

A valid tax ID (W-9 is attached as RFP Appendix H) must be submitted with Vendor’s proposal.

The proposal must address all requirements of this RFP and provide all information requested. Failure to comply with the requirements of the RFP will result in the disqualification of Vendor’s proposal.

Proposals submitted on reduced and/or mutilated forms will be rejected.

The HBLB reserves the right, however, to seek and receive necessary clarification/supplementation from Vendors within 5 days of receiving responsive proposals and prior to awarding any contract. Clarification/supplementation during this time period will be limited to ensuring compliance with requirements, forms, and certifications and is not the opportunity for a Vendor to modify its proposal.

Note: ALL responsive vendors must be registered to perform business with the State of Alabama to be awarded a state contract. A copy of the State Vendor Application and information pertinent to doing business with the State of Alabama is available at the following website: <https://procurement.staars.alabama.gov/webapp/PRDVSS1X1/AltSelfService>. Registration is required every two (2) years. Applications should be submitted to the Purchasing Division of the Alabama Department of Finance through the website above.

Certifications Based on Proposal Submission

By submitting a proposal, Vendor warrants acceptance and agreement with all terms and conditions presented in this RFP and further certifies that Vendor is legally authorized to conduct business within the State of Alabama and to comply with providing the services described.

Vendor warrants by submitting a proposal that all statements contained in the proposal are true and correct.

By submitting a proposal, Vendor warrants that neither Vendor nor any of Vendor’s trustees, officers, directors, employees, agents, servants, volunteers, subcontractors, etc. is a current employee of the Home Builders Licensure Board and that no such individuals have been employed by the Board within a two (2) year window preceding the issuance of this RFP. During the term of any awarded contract, Vendor shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with this requirement.

Vendor certifies by submission of a proposal that Vendor has not publicly or privately colluded with any other vendor.

Vendor certifies by submission of a proposal that it has disclosed and agrees to be held by a continuing obligation to disclose financial and other interests (public or private, direct or indirect) that may pose a potential conflict of interest, or, which may conflict in any manner with Vendor's obligations and performance of an awarded contract. Vendor shall not employ any individual with a conflict of interest to perform any service described in this RFP.

Date Proposals Received

Proposals will be received until 4:30 pm CST, Tuesday, January 22, 2019. Proposals must be received by this date and time to be considered by HBLB.

Return Proposals to:

ATTN: Effie M. Hawthorne
Home Builders Licensure Board
445 Herron Street
P.O. Box 303605
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

**Proposals may be returned via Express/Overnight mail to street address only!*

Proposal Opening

Properly identified proposals will be securely kept and will remain unopened until time of proposal opening on Thursday, January 24, 2019 at 9:30 am.

The HBLB does not accept responsibility for the premature openings of a proposal not properly identified or the late arrival of a proposal for whatever reason. Proposal opening will be in the HBLB Conference Room at the Board's office (same address as above). Proposal opening will be in an Open Public Meeting, making information public to those interested respondents who may be present, either in person or by representative. Proposal opening is not to be construed as meaning any vendor meets all specifications as set out in the proposal.

Request to Modify or Withdraw Offer

Vendor may make a written request to modify or withdraw the offer at any time prior to opening. No oral modifications will be allowed. Such requests must be addressed and labeled in the same manner as the original proposal and plainly marked: Modification to (or Withdrawal of) Proposal. Only written requests received by the Board prior to the scheduled opening time will be accepted. The Board will supplement original proposals received with accepted, written modification requests.

Suspected Errors/Clarification

If a vendor suspects an error, omission, or discrepancy in this solicitation, Vendor must immediately notify the HBLB's designee in writing, Effie M. Hawthorne, at the above stated address or by e-mail (Effie.Hawthorne@hblb.alabama.gov). HBLB will issue written instructions, if appropriate, and make any necessary changes available to all interested parties by posting the same on the HBLB's website, <http://www.hblb.alabama.gov>. It is the responsibility of all interested vendors to monitor this webpage for announcements regarding this RFP.

If a vendor considers any part of the RFP unclear, that vendor is expected to make a written request for clarification, prior to the submission of its proposal. The HBLB will respond in writing or by e-mail to all such requests if a response is deemed appropriate. The HBLB's response will state the request for clarification followed by a statement of clarification. A copy of the response will be provided to all eligible vendors by posting the same on the Board's website, <http://www.hblb.alabama.gov>. It is the responsibility of all interested vendors to monitor this webpage for announcements regarding this RFP.

The deadline for submitting such questions is 4:30 pm on Tuesday, January 15, 2019. HBLB's response to questions will be provided no later than 48 hours from this submission deadline.

Amendments

Amendments to this RFP, if issued, will be made available to all interested vendors registered through the Alabama Department of Finance's Purchasing Division as required by posting the same on the HBLB's website, as well as the Alabama Comptroller's RFP database. The amendment(s) will incorporate the clarification or change and provide a new date and time for new or amended proposals, if applicable. It is the responsibility of all interested vendors to monitor the HBLB's webpage for announcements regarding this RFP.

Proposal Firm Time

The proposal will remain firm and unaltered after opening for one-hundred and twenty (120) days after the proposal due date or until HBLB signs a contract with another vendor, whichever is earlier. HBLB may accept Vendor's proposal at any time during the proposal firm time, subject to successful contract negotiations.

Responsibility to Read and Understand RFP

By responding to this solicitation, Vendor will be held to have read and thoroughly examined this RFP. Failure to read and thoroughly examine the RFP will neither excuse any failure to comply with the requirements of the RFP or any resulting contract, nor be the basis for any claim for additional compensation.

Point of Contact

HBLB will consider the person who signs Vendor's proposal to be the contact person for all matters pertaining to the proposal unless Vendor expressly designates another person in writing. By signing the proposal, Vendor agrees to be bound by all terms and conditions of the RFP. Any exceptions to the specified terms and conditions must be clearly set forth within Vendor's proposal. Vendor may be deemed non-responsive if its proposal contains exceptions to the terms and specifications of the RFP.

Contract Negotiations

The selected vendor may be required to enter into contract negotiations at the discretion of HBLB. If an agreement cannot be reached to the satisfaction of HBLB, the Board may reject the vendor's proposal or revoke the selection and begin negotiations with another qualified vendor.

Upon acceptance of Vendor's proposal by the Board, the parties will execute a formal contract, in writing, duly signed by the proper parties thereto, which shall be subject to review by the Legislative Contract Review Oversight Committee of the State of Alabama and will require the approval and signature of the Governor of the State of Alabama. Any awarded contract, proposed changes, amendments, and addendums thereto, must be approved and signed by the appropriately authorized State of Alabama and HBLB official(s) to be legally effective.

Vendor will assume responsibility for providing services under the executed contract on the effective date of the contract, which will be the date of approval and signature of the Governor of Alabama or designee. The executed contract will not be effective until it has received all requisite state government approvals. Vendor shall not begin performing services thereunder until notified by the Board. Vendor will not be entitled to compensation for work or services performed prior to the effective date of any awarded contract. If Vendor begins any billable work prior to final approval and execution of a contract, Vendor does so at its own risk. Vendor is entitled to no compensation for work or services performed prior to the effective date of the contract.

This RFP does not, by itself, obligate the Board; such obligation shall commence only upon the execution of any approved contract. However, part or all of this RFP may be incorporated into any executed contract, along with Vendor's proposal.

The Board hereby reserves the right to add terms and conditions during contract negotiations, all within the scope of this RFP.

Standard Contract Terms

A standard agency contract will be required. Standard agency Acknowledgement Forms will be required for any individual associated with the successful vendor to perform services under an executed contract.

Proposed Contract/Contract Term

The anticipated contract term for this RFP is for less than one year.

Reservations

HBLB anticipates awarding a contract to the most responsible, substantially compliant, and lowest-priced Vendor. However, HBLB hereby reserves the right to cancel this RFP, reject any or all proposals, to reject individual proposals for failure to meet any requirement; to award by item, part, or portion of an item, group of items, or total; to waive minor defects and/or seek additional proposals by reissuing this RFP; and also reserves the right to award one or more professional service contracts that ABPP determines to be in the best interest of the State of Alabama and HBLB. All services may be awarded to one professional service provider or HBLB may award different services described in the RFP to different/multiple providers; likewise, HBLB may award a contract to a single vendor with one or more approved sub-contractors.

HBLB reserves the right to award the contract to a vendor other than the lowest-priced vendor if a higher-priced proposal provides the best value as determined by HBLB.

Submission of a proposal confers on Vendor no right to a selection or to a subsequent contract.

This process is only for the benefit of HBLB and is to provide HBLB with competitive information to assist in the selection process. All decisions on compliance, evaluation, terms, and conditions will be made solely at the discretion of HBLB.

Payment of Costs

HBLB is not responsible for and will not pay or reimburse any associated cost incurred by Vendor in the preparation and submission of Vendor's proposal or in any processes associated with Vendor's participation, regardless of whether Vendor is selected.

Evaluation and Method of Selection

The proposals will be evaluated by the HBLB Public Relations Committee, Executive Director, General Counsel, and Senior Accountant during a public meeting of the committee on January 31, 2019, at 9:00 AM. HBLB anticipates making a vendor selection on the aforementioned date, but reserves the right for an extension of time as required.

Vendor selection will be based on the proposal that meets or exceeds the requirements set forth in this RFP. Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and completeness of the information provided. Vendors must provide comprehensive statements that illustrate their understanding of the proposed contractual requirements. The HBLB may seek clarification of a proposal from any vendor at any time; Vendor's failure to timely respond is cause for rejection. Clarification is not an opportunity to modify a proposal.

The HBLB may request an oral presentation or conduct interviews to support Vendor's written proposal.

Any vendor whose proposal does not meet the mandatory requirements and does not provide a primary proposal that meets all the required specifications of the RFP will be considered non-compliant.

Proposal evaluations will be scored and based on the response to the requirements of this RFP and held as the primary proposal. Alternative proposals will not be considered as the basis for the evaluation of the successful vendor. All proposals received will become the property of HBLB. HBLB further reserves the right to use for its benefit the ideas contained in proposals received. After the evaluation of proposals received and selection of the successful vendor, the selection and the award will be posted on the agency's website.

Upon HBLB selecting a vendor's proposal for contract negotiations, HBLB will send that Vendor written notice. Notice letters sent or posted during proposal firm time, or during any extension thereof, will extend the proposal firm time until such time as HBLB signs a contract or determines negotiations with vendor have failed. Receipt or posting of a notice of award is not the equivalent of a contract with HBLB.

Evaluation Criteria

Experience, Expertise, Knowledge, Stability, and Reputation of Vendor, including Certification (40%)

Understanding and Responsiveness to RFP (30%)

Proposed Budget (30%)