

Washington County Community College

ONE COLLEGE DRIVE, CALAIS, ME

PHONE: (207) 454-1023, FAX (207) 454-1026

PROPOSAL:

WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE (WCCC) is seeking proposals for the design and execution of a highly creative and innovative multi-year marketing plan designed to increase enrollment at Maine's smallest Community College.

ABOUT WCCC:

Washington County Community College is Maine's smallest community college in Downeast, Maine. Our small size provides us the opportunity work with students on an individual basis and responsive to their academic and co-curricular goals. WCCC exposes the word COMMUNITY in our name. The College offers more than 28 associate degree and certificate programs at among the lowest tuition and fees in New England. Students at WCCC enjoy a vibrant and comprehensive college experience with two apartment, suite-style, residence halls, a fitness center and a broad array of student engagement and volunteer opportunities on campus and in beautiful Downeast Maine. In the classroom, WCCC students gain hands-on experience and learn from faculty who live and work in the community. WCCC students can graduate with a degree that transfers easily to the University of Maine System, Husson University, and to several of the most prestigious universities and colleges in New England and beyond or that allows them to start a high-wage career in a trade-related field. WCCC offers an affordable and smart start to higher education for motivated students.

BID INFORMATION:

A. Due Date: All responses must be received before 3 p.m. on Friday, July 10, 2020.

All questions must be received by Friday, June 19 2020.

B. Structure: This RFP is divided into four distinct parts. Each part will be evaluated separately and may be awarded separately. Respondents are not required to respond to all sections and are encouraged to respond only to the areas appropriate to their expertise.

- Part 1 – Creative Planning & Strategy
- Part 2 – Marketing Materials (e.g. prospective piece, viewbook, postcards, letters)
- Part 3 – Video Production
- Part 4 – Digital Marketing Services

C. Submission: Proposals are to be submitted to the attention of Ashley Macdonald at WCCC by July 10, 2020.

- E-mail to amacdonald@wccc.me.edu with the subject line "Marketing Services RFP," or
- Mail in a sealed envelope plainly marked "Marketing Services RFP" to Washington County Community College, One College Drive, Calais, ME 04619, ATTN: Ashley Macdonald "Marketing Services RFP".
- Delivery to the business office at One College Drive, Calais, ME 04619

Proposals shall remain firm for ninety (90) days from date of submittal.

D. Questions: Questions should be directed to Ashley Macdonald by phone at 207-454-1023 or amacdonald@wccc.me.edu with the subject line of "Marketing Services RFP Questions." The question deadline is in place to allow sufficient time for questions to be answered prior to the RFP due date. Responses to inquiries, if they change or clarify the RFP in a substantial manner, will be forwarded by addenda to all parties that have received a copy of the RFP. The College will not be bound by oral responses to inquiries or written responses other than addenda.

E. Evaluation:

Responses for each section will be evaluated as follows:

- Understanding of the College and the prospective student market, description of due diligence activities (15%)
- Creative and innovative marketing vision (35%)
- Emphasis on return on investment and results tracking (20%)
- Service costs, experience and reputation (30%)

Preference will be given to vendors who:

- Are located in Maine and are easily accessible to travel to and from WCCC's Calais location, which is One College Drive, Calais, ME 04619.
- Have extensive experience/resources in all three parts of the RFP.

WCCC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any formality in any proposal, and generally take such actions as shall be in their best interest(s).

SCOPE OF INFORMATION PART 1 - CREATIVE PLANNING & STRATEGY

WCCC is seeking a highly creative and strategic team to lead the College in the development and execution of a results-oriented three-year marketing campaign intended to increase enrollment.

In prior campaigns, WCCC has spent roughly \$75,000 annually on production and placement for all marketing activities including printing and mailing. In the past two years this effort has been focused around a social media advertising, local and regional radio, television, and retargeting combined with a broadcast buy of similar value. Additional smaller scale efforts have included text messaging campaign design, WCCC app, and communication calendar planning for prospective students. These prior efforts are noted only as a point of reference and are not intended to define the scope of future activities.

WCCC has many value propositions to offer prospective students including cost, location, flexibility, value, workforce and professional development opportunities, transfer and/or high wage careers upon graduation and quality of programs to name few. WCCC's name recognition is limited as mostly associated with Washington County. The college has worked to streamline messaging and focused on the slogan "Discover Choices...Create Success." The College's biggest challenges are working with a limited budget to develop assets that can be used for multiple purposes over multiple years; misperception of quality, distance, and Washington County. There is currently a desire to look at develop a new print, radio, tv, and broadcast ads.

The primary goal of marketing is to grow enrollment in adult learners while maintaining messages to traditionally aged students. The College's biggest challenge is creating a three-year, rather than year-by-year, marketing plan with highly targeted audiences, clear goals and trackable results. The College serves a broad range of students and targets high school students, non-traditional students, and parents/guardians of high school students. With a decreasing number of high school students, we need to find creative ways to access additional audiences, especially the non-traditional audience. The College also focuses a great deal on current student success and retention. Activities centered around student success and retention are essential to consider in prospective student marketing planning.

In your response to this section, please describe:

1. The information, resources and due diligence strategies you would employ to understand the prospective student audience and to target your proposed marketing efforts effectively.
2. How you might expand upon and/or refine WCCC's current messaging.
3. How you would approach ensuring that prospective student marketing connects with current student marketing.
4. A sample outline of potential marketing activities and plans, including information about what target audiences the marketing activities would reach.
5. A description of the return on investment you would anticipate from these activities and what metrics would be used to track the results and measure the success of the campaign.
6. How each of the three years of marketing activities can or should be coordinated to increase impact over time, and what if any connection would be made to prior marketing campaigns.
7. Your experience in marketing and design, any experience directly related to higher education marketing, samples of relevant work and your overall reputation and philosophy.
8. A full description of all costs associated with the marketing activities described above, as well as a schedule of hourly rates for the most common services your organization offers.
9. Additional services that are available.

SCOPE OF INFORMATION PART 2 – VIDEO PRODUCTION

WCCC is seeking a talented video production and creative service team to lead in the creation of a variety of videos. Each year the College seeks to update existing online videos, integrate new videos into the College's website and activities, and film new footage for broadcast advertisements. The College is seeking bids for general video production and creative conception in an effort to facilitate easy contracting as projects arise. These projects could include:

- The creation of 1-3 30-second broadcast advertisements, as led by the winning bidder of the Creative and Marketing Services contract described Section 1.
- 3-5 15-30 second student and/or alumni profile videos that can be used to support online marketing initiatives.
- A 1-2 minute virtual tour of the campus, designed to help new students find their way around campus and to introduce them to key services and personnel.

To bid on video production work, please describe:

1. A full description of all costs associated with similar video projects, as well as a schedule of hourly/half or whole day rates for video production, creative conception and the most common services your organization offers.
2. The philosophy and/or recommendations you have for developing attractive & effective videos that mirror the look, feel & themes that are presented across other WCCC marketing mediums. Your experience in video production and marketing, any experience directly related to higher education marketing, and your overall reputation and philosophy.

SCOPE OF INFORMATION PART 3: ONLINE MARKETING SERVICES

WCCC is seeking a highly qualified and experienced vendor to provide the College's online marketing services and guide its implementation strategy. WCCC spends roughly \$10,000 on online marketing annually, which in the past has been focused on social media marketing, and retargeting. Looking to the future, WCCC is interested in expanding the reach and impact of online advertising efforts. These online marketing mediums must integrate WCCC's marketing campaign look, feel, and branding as well as coordinate the vision and theme from other marketing mediums.

The nature and scope of work may vary and will likely include the following:

- a. Online marketing including:
 - i. Pay per click & key word analysis
 - ii. Retargeting
 - iii. Social Media Marketing (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn)
 - iv. YouTube Pre-roll, Hulu and similar TV alternatives
 - v. Additional relevant online marketing services as suggested by vendor

WCCC creates specific landing pages for online marketing initiatives and may look for assistance/coordination with this. Please describe the following:

- Your experience in developing landing pages specifically related to online marketing.
- Your experience coordinating with other external web vendors to provide the necessary resources to develop landing pages.
- Sample landing pages you have developed for other clients.

To bid on WCCC's online advertising work, please describe:

1. The information, resources and due diligence strategies you would employ to understand the prospective student audience and to target your proposed marketing efforts effectively.
2. Sample activities or advertising methods you would suggest to expand WCCC's online reach.
3. A description of the return on investment you would anticipate from these activities, what metrics would be used to track the results and measure the success of the campaign, and what reports would be provided to show the results of each campaign.
4. Your experience in online advertising and marketing, any experience directly related to higher education marketing, and your overall reputation and philosophy.

5. A full description of all costs associated with the marketing activities described above, as well as a schedule of base rates for the most common services your organization offers.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Bidders for all sections shall ensure that all information required herein is submitted with the proposal. All information provided should be verifiable by documentation requested by the College. Failure to provide all information, inaccuracy or misstatement may be sufficient cause for rejection of the proposal or rescission of an award. Bidders are encouraged to provide any additional information describing operational abilities.

A. The following must accompany your proposal:

1. A description of the company and a statement of your qualifications.
2. Your company profile at a glance as well as the names and qualification of the key personnel who would work with WCCC, including education, certification, training & tenure with your company.
3. Pricing for all items within the Scope of Information, including monthly or reoccurring costs, and any one-time costs. Rough estimates can be used in the case of media buys.
4. A list of at least three references with your proposal. These references should be agencies your firm has done business within the past year on projects with a similar scope to this one. Provide company names with contact person and telephone number.
5. An implementation timeline.
6. A list of the tasks WCCC will need to perform in order to assist with the implementation of service.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS:

- A. The proposals shall remain firm for ninety (90) days from date of submittal.
- B. The cost and compensation for all services shall be clearly indicated.
- C. Description of all proposed services and time requirements shall be clearly described in the proposal.
- D. It is the vendor's responsibility to confirm they have sufficient information required for the proposal. Any additional information required is to be brought to WCCC's attention.
- E. This RFP shall be referenced in, and considered part of, any final contract.
- F. All applicable costs are to be built into the RFP. No separate costs for items not included in the RFP will be accepted unless agreed to by WCCC in advance.

- G. WCCC is exempt from sales and excise taxes. Such taxes shall not be included in quoted prices. If any taxes are known by the Vendor to apply they shall be considered an expense of the Vendor and deemed a part of the quoted prices.
- H. By submitting a proposal, the bidder agrees and assures that the specifications are adequate, and the bidder accepts the terms and conditions herein. Any exceptions should be noted in your response.
- I. It is the vendor's responsibility to confirm they have sufficient information required for the proposal. Any additional information required is to be brought to WCCC's attention.
- J. The bidder shall be responsible for all costs associated with this proposal up to and including any contract that may result from this proposal.

The following MCCS Standard Terms and Conditions apply to all contracts with WCCC.

**NOTICE TO ALL BIDDERS REGARDING CONDITIONS ON BIDS
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL MCCS CONTRACTS**

The following Maine Community College System (MCCS) standard contracting terms and conditions are incorporated and shall become a part of any final contract that will be awarded by any college or other operating unit of the MCCS. These terms and conditions derive from the public nature and limited resources of the MCCS. MCCS DOES NOT AGREE TO:

1. provide any defense, hold harmless or indemnity;
2. waive any statutory or constitutional immunity;
3. apply the law of a state other than Maine;
4. procure types or amounts of insurance beyond those MCCS already maintains or waive any rights of subrogation;
5. add any entity as an additional insured to MCCS policies of insurance;
6. pay attorneys' fees or costs for any other entity;
7. promise confidentiality in a manner contrary to Maine's Freedom of Access Act;
8. permit an entity to change unilaterally any term or condition once the contract is signed; and
9. automatic renewals for term(s) greater than month-to-month.

By submitting a response to a Request for Proposal, bid or other like offer to do business with a college or other operating unit of the MCCS, YOUR ENTITY UNDERSTANDS AND AGREES THAT:

1. The above standard terms and conditions are thereby incorporated either expressly or by reference to this notice into any agreement entered into between MCCS and your entity, and that your entity will not propose or demand any contrary terms;
2. The above standard terms and conditions will govern the interpretation of such agreement notwithstanding the expression of any other term and/or condition to the contrary;
3. Your entity will not propose to any college or other operating unit of the MCCS any contractual documents of any kind that are not in at least 11-point font and completely contained in one Word or PDF document, and that any references to terms and conditions, privacy policies or any other conditions referenced outside of the contract will not apply; and
4. Your entity will identify at the time of submission which, if any, portion or your submitted materials are entitled to "trade secret" exemption from disclosure under Maine's Freedom of Access Act; that failure to so identify will authorize MCCS to conclude that no portions are so exempt; and that your entity will defend, indemnify and hold harmless MCCS in any and all legal actions that seek to compel MCCS to disclose under Maine's Freedom of Access Act some or all of your submitted materials and/or contract, if any, executed between MCCS and your entity.