

Questions & Answers to RFP for Promotion Services

Revised 1/10/2012

1. The Board of Regents, State of Iowa 2008 Communications Plan (Phase I) details many of the objectives listed in this RFP. Is this contract a continuation of a campaign already in place? If so, what agency/individual has been involved and for how long?

This is a new campaign requested by university students in response to the nearly 25% cut in State appropriations experienced in recent years. They expressed concern that the public universities are not being perceived as the important educational units or the economic engines they are by the public, which may in turn result in their degrees being undervalued or tuition increases being higher than inflation. This campaign has much the same goal as the 2008 one, but will involve students and alumni to a greater extent.

The 2008 RFP was terminated with no vendor being selected.

2. If partnering with an agency/individual is a new endeavor, please provide some background about why you're choosing to move forward with a partner now.

Our universities have robust internal marketing staff and plans that focus on the uniqueness of that particular campus. The need for this campaign is to create a unified Board of Regents campaign that will promote the role of PUBLIC universities in the progress of the state and world.

3. The RFP states that vendors should plan on 10 to 20 hours per week of work. How was this number determined? Are there activities already being implemented from the plan? And, can we assume that there are additional resources for hard costs, such as printing or media placement?

The hours are a best guess of time. We assume more time per week would be needed as a campaign is created and refined; we assume fewer hours will be needed to monitor and refine the course of a campaign as the year goes on. No activities are currently underway.

There are no plans at this time for the universities to bear the costs of printing or media placement.

4. Has the Board of Regents placed ads in the past? If so, please provide some information about the campaign.

No, the Board of Regents has not had a media campaign before.

5. In the estimating section, onsite locations are referenced. Please clarify "onsite", e.g., does this include university locations as well as the Board of Regents office? We are trying to determine the extent of travel required for this project; local/ Des Moines area, vs. travel to each school... and how often?

There should be minimal travel to individual university campuses. We assume most meetings will be held in the Board Office or via conference calls. Your firm will need to determine travel for fact gathering or message testing.

6. In the "target audience" section, the RFP lists "students and families", are those only current Regent's college students, or are we also targeting perspective students? How far is the student reach?

Broadly define "students" as current and prospective.

7. Please explain why faculty/staff were not included as a target audience. They would seem to be an important group in terms of reinforcing expertise that is of value to local businesses and other stakeholders.

We assumed that "target audience" meant those to whom the message must resonate/persuade/convince. Faculty/staff understand the value of the Regent institutions and greatly assist in enhancing the reputation of the universities. This campaign is to unify and multiply those efforts.

8. Can the due date be extended to January 20?

Regretfully, no due to time constraints.

9. What is the budget amount that has been approved by the Board of Regents for this effort?

~~No budget has been set by the Board.~~ REVISED 1/10/12

The Board of Regents recognizes that the scope of this project is broad and will require adequate funds to accomplish. We anticipate the costs will exceed \$100,000. Selection of the service provider will be based on a variety of criteria including, but not limited to, approach and methodology in meeting the outlined objectives, demonstrated competence, knowledge, references and unique qualifications to perform the services, in addition to offering a fair and reasonable price that is consistent with current market conditions. See section D.11 of the RFP.

10. What are your communications objectives?

Greater public awareness of the contributions of the Regent universities to the reputation, economic growth and value of the State of Iowa, and advancement of higher education and research in the state, nation and world.

11. Which current and/or past student lobbying has been most effective?

Student lobbying has not been as effective as desired in its plea for greater state appropriations for the universities to mitigate tuition increases.

12. Have any initial steps been taken to secure URLs for organizational names?

No.

13. Would you provide information as to the composition of the panel judging the RFP responses and any additional information related to judging criteria/weighting?

The panel will consist of the Executive Director, Student Regent, Chief Counsel, Chief Business Officer and the Communications Director.

14. Does this RFP offer preference to use of Iowa agencies?

The Board will comply with Iowa Code 15.102 on small businesses and targeted small businesses.

15. Has any research been done or is research planned to set benchmarks against which the results of the campaign will be measured?
No. Metrics should be part of the responder's proposal.
16. What are the key metrics/how will Regents Office measure success?
See answer above.
17. What is the source of funding for the campaign?
General operating funds of the universities.
18. What student representation is there on the Board of Regents?
Iowa Code requires the 9th Regent to be a student of a Regent university. The student is appointed to a 6-year term by the Governor and confirmed by the senate. If the student Regent graduates or is no longer enrolled at an institution of higher education under the board's control, at which time the term of the ninth member shall expire one year from the date on which the member graduates or is no longer enrolled in an institution of higher education under the board's control. However, if within that year the ninth member reenrolls in any institution of higher education under the board's control on a full-time basis and is a student in good standing at either the graduate or undergraduate level, the term of the ninth member shall continue in effect.
19. How does the Board of Regents currently interact with students, including student body presidents? Is there any formal communication directed to students from the Board of Regents?
The Regents typically meet with student government leaders on six of eight annual Board meeting dates (this excludes the Board's two telephonic meetings). Regents or the Executive Director will hold meetings with student leadership throughout the year as needed, particularly in discussions on tuition. Student leadership is invited to present at the Board meeting which takes up the first consideration of tuition matters.
One Board Office staff member is assigned as liaison to students.
20. How is news affecting current students communicated by the Board of Regents and does that communication come from the Board or the University the student attends?
The Board Office has a Communications Officer and a student liaison who handle Regent communications with students. In addition, the Board notifies the students in writing, in accordance with Iowa Code, 30 days prior to consideration of a tuition increase. Regular ongoing student communication is done by university communications staff.
21. On page 9 of the RFP, it reads "Assurances, Representations and Authorization to Release Information" form is to be submitted **prior** to submitting bid proposal, but on page 11, it states "this form must be submitted to the Board Office **along** with Bidder's proposal." Would you please clarify the proper submission of this proposal? Or do you want this submitted BOTH before and along with the proposal, in which case, where/when does the form with the "original signature" get submitted?
Thank you for catching this error. The form should be submitted with the bid proposal, which is also stated on page 4.

22. Will there be a media component? And if so, what budget?

The media component should be built into the bid proposal costs.

23. Could you define 'project work plan' under 11. Proposal Review?

The work plan would be an outline of the steps needed to achieve the goals of the campaign. For instance, reviews of material and initial meetings, research, interviews and meetings schedules, outreach, communications and use of media, reporting, outcomes assessment.

24. Are you expecting to see proposed messaging and actual deliverables in this proposal?

It is assumed that the successful bidder will need to gather information from the universities and stakeholders to finalize these results. Ideas and suggestions on messaging and deliverables included in the proposal will assist the evaluation committee in understanding the creativity of the bidder.

25. Can you define 'student-led'?

Student leaders approached the Regents with a proposal to create a campaign to improve the image of the Regent universities with the described targeted audience. Students will be an integral partner in this project.