

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN
CONSERVATION PROGRAMS



Oregon Conservation Education & Assistance Network

The Oregon Conservation Education and Assistance Network (OCEAN), is inviting communication consultants to submit a proposal to enable OCEAN to support NRCS Oregon’s communication and outreach efforts through a variety of measures that connect NRCS Oregon, OCEAN, Oregon’s CDs and other partners to private landowners and customers.

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I. OVERVIEW:

The selected consultant, herein referred to as the “Proposer,” will enter into a contract with the Oregon Conservation Education and Assistance Network (OCEAN) to increase education and public awareness of financial and technical opportunities available to the public through communication and outreach support. Specifically, this contract will focus on encouraging new and underserved producers to participate in Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) farm bill programs, highlighting the partnerships between NRCS and Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts on Farm Bill Program delivery, and will leverage modern communication tools to broaden OCEAN and NRCS’s reach with target audiences. For more detailed information see the Scope of Work below.

OCEAN is committed to diversity and inclusivity, and we strongly encourage you to submit a proposal, even if you do not believe you meet every one of the qualifications as described or if you require a reasonable accommodation to perform under contract with us.

II. ORGANIZATION INFORMATION:

The Oregon Conservation Education and Assistance Network (founded as the Oregon Conservation Employee Association Network) was formed in 1992 as a membership organization to provide conservation district employees with capacity building, education, and professional development opportunities to solve natural resource conservation issues that districts face throughout the state. OCEAN's strategy is to deliver the most comprehensive professional development program for conservation district employees, providing the skills necessary to be successful in delivering conservation on the ground. Our strategic goals are to:

- be the authority for training and conservation technology delivery
- build bridges between Districts and others to improve conservation effectiveness
- have the organizational knowledge to be self-sustaining
- enlist members that are actively involved in the organization because of our mission

OCEAN delivers conservation based technical training, professional development, education, assistance, and networking opportunities to 200+ conservation district employees in Oregon. CONNECT is OCEAN's main endeavor, and provides attendees with two full days of technical training built around the feedback received from the attendees themselves. It is well attended and provides a depth of training that was previously unavailable to district employees on a statewide scale.

OCEAN's voting membership is comprised of Soil and Water Conservation District employees throughout Oregon, and non-voting membership is open to anyone. OCEAN has an 11 member board of representatives, drawing members from each of six distinct regions and five at-large positions.

III. RFP RECEPTION:

By responding to this RFP, the Proposer agrees to be responsible for fully understanding the requirements of the RFP and will ask any questions to make sure that understanding is gained. OCEAN reserves the right to reject any or all responses to the RFP, to advertise for new responses, or to accept any RFP response deemed to be in the best interests of OCEAN.

Acceptance of any RFP should not be construed as a contract or indicate any commitment on the

part of the OCEAN for any future action. The RFP does not commit OCEAN to pay for any costs incurred in the submission of a response to this RFP or for any cost incurred prior to the execution of a final contract.

IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS:

All Proposers must submit the following information. Omissions may be grounds for a determination of non-compliance with proposal requirements, resulting in disqualification.

Proposal length not to exceed 12 pages in total

- a) Resume or corporate profile clearly reflecting qualifications and experiences.
- b) Samples of communication and media materials (no more than three samples, 6 total pages or less in length).
- c) Proposal that clearly describes how relevant experience will be applied to accomplish the scope of work.
- d) Minimum and maximum number of hours per month that are required or preferred by the Proposer for the position to be feasible and/or desirable, and days of the week / times of the day that the Proposer is available to perform communication services.
- e) Hourly rate that is required or preferred by the Proposer for the consulting arrangement to be feasible and/or desirable. Note that travel hours shall not be billable and work hours shall be billed to the nearest one-quarter of an hour.
- f) Any administrative expenses that the Bidder anticipates billing to OCEAN (e.g. telephone, mileage, etc.). Note that out-of-pocket expenses shall require pre-approval to be reimbursed.
- g) Any other terms and/or conditions required or preferred by the Bidder for the consulting arrangement to be feasible and/or desirable.
- h) Description of any material (in excess of \$50,000) claims, judgments, arbitrations investigations or lawsuits pending against the individual or firm.
- i) Acknowledgement that the Bidder agrees to purchase and maintain during the entire term of the consulting arrangement General Commercial Liability insurance, Automobile Liability Insurance, and workers' compensation (if applicable), as described in the LICENSING and INSURANCE sections below.
- j) List of at least three (3) professional references

V. REPORT TO:

The Proposer will report to the OCEAN President on behalf of the OCEAN Board of Directors.

VI. STATUS:

Contract

VII. SCOPE OF WORK:

The Communications Consultant shall provide the following communications services (the “Services”), as and when needed and directed to do so by the OCEAN President. Close collaboration with NRCS Public Affairs staff will also be required. The amount of time to be dedicated to each series of tasks is approximate.

Media and Communications Materials (~30% of Service time)

- a) Draft regular articles for release on OCEAN’s website, social media, through NRCS Public Affairs outlets, and to Oregon Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs).
- b) In consultation with OCEAN and NRCS Public Affairs staff, develop press releases about locally led conservation and Farm Bill programs.
- c) In consultation with OCEAN and NRCS Public Affairs staff, work with promotional materials, including flyers, fact sheets, program tools, and survey summaries.
- d) Ensure proper permissions have been obtained for use of partner logos and all media in promotional materials.
- e) Provide editing input for consistent style and grammatical correctness for all communication materials, including website communications.

Web Support (~20% of Service time)

- f) Provide editorial oversight of website content, in collaboration with OCEAN and NRCS Public Affairs staff and their web management personnel. Coordinate webpage maintenance, with the goal of ensuring that new information (article links, stories, and events) is posted regularly. OCEAN’s website uses the WordPress CMS platform.
- g) Research and establish links between oceanconnect.org and relevant partner websites. Periodically review links to ensure functionality and relevance.
- h) In collaboration with OCEAN and their web management contractors, help define the specifications to upgrade oceanconnect.org with additional functionalities and features.

Social Media (~40% of Service time):

- i) Compile and maintain a list of Farm Bill and SWCD conservation program participants willing to undertake interviews about their experiences with these programs.
- j) Draft interview questions, revise as directed, and lead interviews with willing participants about their program participation experiences.

- k) Employ a mix of audio and video media in support of interview activities. Secure as directed the required technical consultants to help with audio and video activities.
- l) Compile and archive all interview materials and responses. Secure and manage all permission waivers from interviewees. Work in close collaboration with OCEAN and NRCS Public Affairs staff to ensure all relevant archival guidelines are properly followed.
- m) Use interview materials, audio and video media to create vignettes, summaries and case studies about Farm Bill and SWCD conservation program participant experiences.

Information Gathering and Repository (~10% of Service time):

- n) Develop a repository of all content created for OCEAN and NRCS Public Affairs staff including photos and videos.

VIII. PROJECT SCHEDULE:

This schedule is based on our current funding availability but is subject to change. Contract duration will be one year and 3 months. Renewal depends on funding availability and mutual interest.

May 20, 2024: RFP Delivered

June 11, 2024: Last day for written questions to be received on the RFP document intent.

June 14, 2024: RFP Closes at 4:00 pm Pacific Standard Time

June 18, 2024: Event team evaluates responses

June 20, 2024: Contract Awarded

July 1, 2024: Contract Start Date

September 30, 2025: Contract End Date

IX. QUALIFICATIONS:

Required

- Minimum of 6 years' experience in a Marketing Communications position or other marketing role.
- Minimum of 6 years' experience working with web-based marketing campaigns.
- Excellent writing/editing and verbal communication skills.
- Ability to collaborate with other agencies/organizations and individuals
- Demonstrated knowledge of managing organizational social media services for cross platform marketing, strategies, automation tools, and targeted advertising.
- Demonstrated interpersonal, problem-solving, and communication skills.
- Exercises initiative in undertaking routine assignments/projects without direct supervision.
- Demonstrated experience in story creation and publishing in written and audio-visual formats from interview through publishing.
- Ability to meet strict deadlines and changing priorities.

Preferred

- Bachelor's degree preferred.
- Understanding of the locally led conservation efforts of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Natural Resources Conservation Service is highly desired.
- Graphical design and layout experience with industry standard software such as Adobe Creative Cloud is preferred.
- Knowledge of and experience with shooting and editing video is preferred.

X. LICENSING REQUIREMENTS:

Proposer must provide proof of a valid state Driver's License and must remain licensed for the duration of the contract.

XI. INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- a) Proposer will be required to provide proof of automobile liability insurance in an amount not less than \$250,000 per person, \$500,000 per accident for bodily injury and property damage, including owned, hired and non-owned vehicle coverage.
- b) Proposer will also be required to provide proof of general commercial liability insurance in an amount not less than \$250,000 aggregate, \$250,000 occurrence with OCEAN named as additional insured.

XII. LOCATION:

The Proposer must be available for meetings in the Willamette Valley as needed. Some travel throughout Oregon may be needed on occasion, however most meetings will be conducted by web or phone conference. All work will occur in the State of Oregon.

XIII. SELECTION:

Proposers who have demonstrated the capacity to meet our requirements will be notified via phone/email of our selection to move forward with the RFP Process.

XIV. SEND PROPOSALS TO:

president@oceanconnect.org

Included in the subject line: RFP for COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT

Any questions or clarifications regarding definitions or interpretations of this RFP must be submitted via email (no phone calls) no later than June 11, 2024 to: president@oceanconnect.org