REQUEST FOR QUOTES (RFQ)

Solicitation No.: RFQ-USWDB-2026-02

Strategic Communications, Outreach, and Stakeholder Engagement

Key Solicitation Information	Details
Issuing Entity	Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board / SC Works Upper Savannah
Service Area	Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, and Saluda Counties
Contract Type	Firm Fixed-Price Professional Services Contract
Term of Performance	12 Months from Execution
Submission Deadline	October 26, 2026, 5:00 PM EDT

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1. Purpose and Overview

The Upper Savannah Workforce Development Board (the "Board"), in partnership with SC Works Upper Savannah, is soliciting written quotes and formal proposals from qualified communications and public relations firms to establish a strategic, multi-channel public communications and regional stakeholder engagement ecosystem.

Serving the seven-county Upper Savannah Workforce Development Area (Abbeville, Edgefield, Greenwood, Laurens, McCormick, Newberry, and Saluda counties), this initiative builds structured public outreach capabilities. Requirements include an executive leadership communications toolkit, regional social media presence, a professional quarterly electronic newsletter, and sustainable editorial workflows that allow Board staff to consistently communicate workforce achievements, training initiatives, employer resources, and community impact.

2. Detailed Scope of Work

The selected Contractor shall develop, standardize, and implement communications frameworks, media channels, editorial calendars, and executive resources:

A. Regional Communications Strategy & Brand Standardization

- Develop an overarching Communications and Public Engagement Strategy covering public notices, media relations, employer outreach, and community awareness.
- Establish uniform graphic standards, messaging voice, brand guidelines, and visual identity systems tailored to the Board and SC Works partnership.
- Design outreach protocols for key stakeholder groups: County Councils, local elected officials, economic development authorities, SC DEW, regional employers, community partners, and program participants.

B. Social Media Architecture & Cross-Platform Content Operations

- Design and deploy an active, sustainable social media framework across target platforms (LinkedIn, Facebook, and complementary regional channels).
- Establish core content pillars: Employer spotlight series, job fairs and hiring events, youth workforce programs, participant success stories, board actions, and regional labor market insights.
- Deliver an operational quarterly editorial content calendar with seasonal and thematic workforce campaigns.
- Produce reusable visual asset templates (flyers, banners, quote cards, carousel posts) formatted for rapid staff deployment.
- Define clear internal submission protocols for field staff to submit local stories, photos, and job fair updates.

C. Quarterly Electronic Newsletter Infrastructure

- Establish a professional, turnkey quarterly electronic newsletter system for external stakeholders, board members, and regional partners.
- Select and configure an email marketing/distribution platform ensuring full Board account ownership and list management compliance.
- Design mobile-responsive email templates featuring modular sections for Executive Director updates, program metrics, hiring events, board announcements, and partner features.

- Establish distribution protocols, subscriber acquisition funnels, and performance tracking (open rates, click-through rates, unsubscribe rates, and audience growth).

D. Board and Executive Communications Toolkit

- Build a comprehensive, reusable communications toolkit for the Workforce Development Director and Board leadership.
- Deliver standardized templates for:
    - Executive statements and board meeting summary memos.
    - Press releases, media advisories, and public notices.
    - Board presentations and slide deck templates.
    - Participant and business success story narrative forms.

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3. Phased Deliverables & Contract Schedule

The engagement shall follow a 12-month phased schedule:

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
Deliverable 1	**Communications & Stakeholder Outreach Strategy:** Comprehensive communications master plan, audience segmentation, core messaging matrix, and brand styling standards.	Months 1–2*(Within 60 Days)*
Deliverable 2	**Social Media Content Strategy, Editorial Calendar & Graphic Templates:** 12-month editorial calendar, platform-specific content frameworks, submission protocols for field staff, and editable design templates.	Months 2–4

Deliverable	Description	Timeline
Deliverable 3	**Quarterly Electronic Newsletter Setup & Inaugural Issue:** Selection and setup of distribution software, subscriber list consolidation, master modular newsletter template, and successful distribution of Issue #1.	Months 3–5
Deliverable 4	**Board and Executive Communications Toolkit:** Complete operational library of executive templates (press releases, talking points, council briefings, slide decks, and crisis communication guidelines).	Months 5–7
Deliverable 5	**Newsletter Production Support & Staff Handoff:** Collaborative production of Issues #2 and #3, paired with direct staff coaching to ensure autonomous staff drafting, scheduling, and distribution.	Months 6–10
Deliverable 6	**Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) & Sustainability Guide:** Written step-by-step procedural manual covering campaign execution, newsletter management, social posting, media dissemination, and audience growth strategies.	Months 10–12

4. Mandatory Submission Requirements

Proposals must include the following components:

1. **Letter of Transmittal:** Signed by an authorized representative of the responding firm.
2. **Technical Approach & Methodology:** Detailed execution plan addressing each phase of the scope of work.
3. **Firm Qualifications & Past Performance:** Overview of firm background demonstrating relevant public-sector, workforce development, or enterprise AI workflow integration experience.
4. **Key Personnel Resumes:** Staffing plan identifying principals.
5. **Cost Quotation / Pricing Schedule:** Firm fixed-price quote itemized by deliverable.
6. **Form W-9:** A signed and dated current IRS Form W-9 (Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification).

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5. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following weighted criteria:

Criteria	Description	Weight
Technical Approach & Strategy Alignment	Demonstrated understanding of regional workforce communications, audience segmentation, and content strategy.	**30%**
Experience & Past Performance	Demonstrated experience executing public communications campaigns, newsletters, and executive toolkits for public or non-profit entities.	**25%**

Criteria	Description	Weight
Staff Knowledge Transfer & Sustainability	Quality of coaching plan, procedural SOPs, and actionable design templates for ongoing staff use.	**25%**
Cost Reasonableness & Value	Competitiveness and total value of the firm fixed-price quote.	**20%**

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6. Submission Guidelines

- **Submission Format:** Electronic PDF submissions sent via email.
- **Submission Address:** kkunkel@uppersavannah.com *(Subject Line: Quote Submission - RFQ-USWDB-2026-02: Strategic Communications)*
- **Deadline:** October 26, 2026 at 5:00 PM EDT. Late submissions will not be considered.