



Solicitation Information
May 15, 2007

LOI# 7003676

**TITLE: Communication Services for National Governors Association
(RI Diploma System & College Readiness)**

Submission Deadline: June 8, 2007 @ 2:00 PM (EDT)

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at questions@purchasing.state.ri.us no later than **May 25, 2007 at 4:00 PM (EDT)**. Please reference the LOI# 7003676 on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

SURETY REQUIRED: No

BOND REQUIRED: Yes

**Jerome D. Moynihan, C.P.M., CPPO
Administrator of Purchasing Systems**

**Vendors must register on-line at the State Purchasing Website at
www.purchasing.state.ri.us**

NOTE TO VENDORS:

Offers received without the entire completed three-page RIVIP Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

LOI# 7003676

***Rhode Island Diploma System and College-Readiness Initiative
Communications Plan and Implementation***

REQUEST for LETTERS of INTEREST

The Rhode Island Department of Administration, Office of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education (RIBGHE) is requesting Letters of Interest from qualified individuals to provide communications services in regard to the Rhode Island Diploma System and College Readiness Initiatives, in accordance with the terms of this solicitation.

RIBGHE is seeking expert knowledge in this area to work with the Office of the Governor, the Office of Higher Education (OHE), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) and the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority (RIIHEA). A strong emphasis will be placed on in-depth knowledge of the development and implementation of statewide communications planning regarding education initiatives involving secondary education and higher education. Individuals or firms that can demonstrate their knowledge, experience, and accomplishments in these areas are encouraged to submit Letters of Interest in response to this Request.

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

Potential offerors are advised to review all sections of this solicitation carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.

Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this request will be rejected as being non-responsive. The state reserves the right to award to one or more offerors.

All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the offeror. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.

Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not present in the Office of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered.

In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.1 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right

to transact business in the state until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040).

REQUEST for LETTERS of INTEREST
Rhode Island Diploma System and College-Readiness Initiative
Communications Plan and Implementation

Bidders are advised that all materials submitted to the State of Rhode Island for consideration in response to this Letter of Interest will be considered to be public records, as defined in Title 38 Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request, once an award has been made.

Background & Overview

In January 2003, the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education adopted new "Regulations...Regarding Public High Schools." These regulations, which require students to demonstrate proficiency in six core subject areas in order to graduate from a public high school in Rhode Island, led to the development of a new Rhode Island Diploma System. Under this new system, beginning with the Class of 2008, all graduates must demonstrate their proficiency in English language arts, mathematics, science, social science, the arts, and technology. They must do so through such means as a Senior Project, an Electronic Portfolio, an Exhibition, or other common tasks or end-of-course assessments. These demonstrations of proficiency may vary to some degree among school districts, but they must meet standards established by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education and they must be approved by a Commissioner's Review.

In Rhode Island, 32 public-school Districts have high schools, plus there are three state-operated high schools and two independent charter high schools. Over the past four years, these schools and districts have worked to implement the new Diploma System that will take full effect with the Class of 2008. The implementation efforts have varied somewhat in their efficacy.

Under the leadership of Governor Donald L. Carcieri and the PK-16 Council that he established and that he chairs, educators in Rhode Island have been fully engaged in developing a seamless system that will link secondary and postsecondary education. The goal is to have all high-school graduates prepared to succeed in postsecondary education without the need for remediation. The high-school graduation requirements in Rhode Island must line up with the requirements for college admission.

Rhode Island is one of ten National Governors Association Honor States. Key to the success of the Honor States program is clear, concise communication at the local and state level regarding high-school reform and the link between reform at the high-school level and higher education. The Governor, legislators, business leaders, postsecondary educators, and K-12 educators must act now. To act they must have a deep understanding of the substantial redesign that is necessary for our high schools to become cutting-edge once again. To develop the understanding necessary, an effective statewide communication plan is paramount.

The RIBGHE, the Board of Regents of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Commissioners of both systems believe that we need a more effective statewide communications strategy so as to ensure that all students and their families, educators, and key stakeholders in the community are aware of the new Diploma System and of its implications for the future of public education, including higher education, in Rhode Island. We need to ensure that students are aware of the requirements that they must meet in order to graduate. We need to ensure that the citizens of our state are aware of the profound changes underway and of the challenges before us as we work together to bring all of our students to proficiency and to prepare our high-school students for success in postsecondary education and in the world of work.

This contract is to provide consultation services and to work with the Office of the Governor, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE), the Office of Higher Education (OHE), and the Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority (RIIHEA) so as to assess the current status of communications regarding the Diploma System and related College Readiness initiatives, to develop a communications plan focused on these issues, and to guide and manage the implementation of the communications plan in order to build public awareness of and support for the parameters of the Diploma System.

Scope of the Work

This contract is to provide consultation and assistance to the Office of the Governor, RIDE, OHE, and RIIHEA regarding the communications strategies for the Diploma System and College Readiness initiatives. The contract activities will include:

- Conducting marketing research and focus groups to determine current communications strengths and shortfalls, as perceived by students, educators, and the community at large
- Developing overall messaging regarding the new diploma system
- Determining effective media applications for communicating core messages, which may include, for example, video spots containing Rhode Island student faces and voices describing the new diploma system and the value of the same to their future success
- Developing a media toolkit, which could be used at the state level or tailored for local use, for communication regarding the diploma system
- Identifying dissemination strategies for delivering messages and product regarding the diploma system and college-readiness initiatives
- Coordinating a Governor's Forum on the diploma system to occur at a high school

- Managing the overall implementation of the communications strategy regarding the diploma system and leveraging these activities in support of a broader college-readiness initiative
- Working closely with the four state agencies to develop coordinated messaging

Tasks

By the end of July 2007 the vendor will:

- Convene a meeting including representatives from the Office of the Governor, RIDE, OHE, and RIIHEA to begin the assessment of the communications needs
- Develop an overall message statement that will guide communications regarding the diploma system and college readiness

During FY08 the vendor will:

- Conduct market research and focus groups preparatory to development of a communications plan
- Develop a communications plan and media toolkit
- Guide the implementation of the communications plan
- Develop, produce, and disseminate media products such as videos, as outlined in the communications plan
- In consultation with the Office of the Governor, develop and coordinate a Governor's Forum or Forums on the diploma system and on college readiness

Deliverables:

By the end of July 2007, the vendor will provide:

- A draft of a communications plan regarding the diploma system and college readiness
- A proposal for an overall messaging statement to guide communications regarding the diploma system and college readiness
- A plan for evaluating the efficacy of the communications strategy

During FY08, the vendor will provide:

- A summary of the findings from marketing research, by October 2007
- A communications plan and timetable regarding the diploma system and college readiness, by November 2007
- A media toolkit suitable for statewide or local application regarding the diploma system and college readiness, by December 2007
- A set of products such as videos, posters, desk items or other materials as determined by the communications plan to promote and build public awareness of the diploma system and college readiness, by the end of February 2008
- A report on the implementation of and the efficacy of the communications plan, by the end of FY08
- A report on the efficacy of the Governor's Forum or Forums, by the end of FY08

All of these deliverables are to be presented on completion to the Commissioner of Higher Education and/or his designee for review and approval.

ADDITIONAL CONTRACTOR REQUIREMENTS/QUALIFICATIONS

- Familiarity with and experience with education initiatives, particularly regarding secondary schools and higher education, as supported by documentation showing the efficacy of these initiatives
- Experience with statewide communications planning and implementation
- Experience coordinating communications campaigns that involve working with multiple stakeholders and with statewide media
- Experience with development of communications tools, such as video clips, Web-based communications materials, and published materials
- Excellent skills in written communication
- Excellent skills at teamwork and partnerships

TERMS OF THE CONTRACT

The Contract will begin **July 1, 2007**, and end **June 30, 2008**. The scope of the work may be modified by RIBGHE prior to beginning work on a given task. RIBGHE retains the option of granting a time extension of up to **12 months** with additional funding if available and if the level of work is expanded by mutual written consent.

COST PROPOSAL/TERMS OF PAYMENT

The contractor must prepare a cost proposal reflecting the hourly rate or other fee structure proposed for this scope of services using the Cost Proposal Forms contained in Appendix A.

The total cost of the contract is not to exceed **\$70,000**.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at questions@purchasing.state.ri.us no later than the **Friday, May 25, 2007 at 4:00 p.m.** **Send your questions in Microsoft Word format. Please reference the LOI # 7003676** on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted and answered on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. For computer technical assistance, call the helpdesk at 401-222-2142, ext: 134.

Letters of Interest to provide the services covered by this request must be received by the Division of Purchases on or before **Friday, June 8, 2007, at 2:00 p.m.**

By Courier:	By Mail:
Division of Purchases, 2 nd Floor RI Department of Administration One Capitol Hill Providence, RI 02908 Attn: Jerome D. Moynihan	Division of Purchases, 2 nd Floor RI Department of Administration One Capitol Hill Providence, RI 02908 Attn: Jerome D. Moynihan

NOTE: Contractor assumes all responsibilities for proposals submitted by mail or commercial delivery service. Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or which are otherwise not presented in the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. **The official time clock is located in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.**

Proposals (an original plus 5 copies) should include the following:

1. A completed and signed three-page RIVIP Bidder Certification Cover Form, available at www.purchasing.state.ri.us.
2. A Cost Proposal as described above.
3. A *separate* Technical Proposal (see below) describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with similar programs, as well as the work plan or approach proposed for this requirement.
4. A completed and signed W-9 (taxpayer identification number and certification). Form is downloadable at www.purchasing.state.ri.us.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Responses will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Capability (background) and qualifications** including curriculum vitae for all members of the proposed project team and letters of reference/recommendation from credible, relevant third parties (0-25 points);
- **A comprehensive listing of similar projects undertaken** (0-25 points)
- **A work plan (including tasks, timelines, and deliverables) that demonstrates the offeror's clear understanding of the State's requirements and the results intended and desired under this contract** (0-35 points);
- **A cost proposal prepared by fiscal year** in accordance with the forms that are attached (0-15 points)

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers. The State also reserves the right to award in whole or in part, and to act in its best interest.

APPENDIX A

BUDGET

The Contractor estimates that its budget for work to be performed under this Agreement is as follows:

<u>Expense Category</u>	Total
1. Personnel	0
2. Fringe Benefits	0
3. Consultant	0
4. In-State Travel	0
5. Out-of-State Travel	0
6. Printing	0
7. Office Expense	0
8. Telephone	0
9. Educational Materials	0
10. Equipment	0
11. Data Processing	0
12. Rental	0
13. Other	0
14.	0
15.	0
16.	0
17.	0
Subtotal	0
Indirect Cost	0
TOTAL	0

It is understood and agreed that the amounts indicated above for the several line items are estimates of expenditures to be incurred by the Contractor on behalf of this Agreement and to be claimed by the Contractor for reimbursement under this Agreement. It is further understood and agreed that actual expenditures may vary from the estimates set forth above and that such variations shall not in themselves be cause for disallowance of reimbursement by RIBGHE; provided, however, that the Contractor shall notify and obtain the approval of the contract officer, in writing, if expenditures to be claimed for reimbursement in any line item above shall begin to vary significantly from the estimate given above; and provided further that unless permission of the contract officer shall have been obtained in advance, no expenditure shall be claimed by the Contractor for reimbursement by RIBGHE under this Agreement if such expenditure shall have been incurred in a line item category not listed above. Transfer of funds is permitted between Expense Categories (1) (2) and (3) up to 10% or \$25,000, whichever is less; all other transfers require prior written approval by the Office of Higher Education.

BUDGET DETAIL SHEET
FISCAL YEAR 2008

SALARY DETAIL

NAME	POSITION TITLE	HOURLY RATE \$	NUMBER OF HOURS	TOTAL ANNUAL SALARY \$
TOTAL REQUEST				\$

FRINGE BENEFIT DETAIL

NAME	POSITION TITLE	PERCENTAGE OF APPLIED FRINGE BENEFIT	TOTAL ANNUAL FRINGE \$
TOTAL REQUEST			\$

DETAIL OF CONSULTANT

NAME	POSITION TITLE	HOURLY RATE \$	NUMBER OF HOURS	TOTAL COST \$
TOTAL REQUEST				\$

EXPLANATION OF OTHER EXPENSES (i.e. travel, printing, office supplies, educational materials, and equipment)

EXPENSE CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	COST