



**Explore Lincoln City**

**City of Lincoln City**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES**

**Lincoln City, Oregon**

**December 18, 2019**

**RFQ SCHEDULE**

Request for Qualifications Issued:	December 18, 2020
Deadline to Submit Clarifying Questions:	January 10, 2020
Request for Qualifications Due:	January 24, 2020
Tentative Date for Interviews, if needed:	January 30-31, 2020
Notice of Intent to Award Contract:	February 5, 2020
Anticipated Contract Start Date:	February 19, 2020



**Explore Lincoln City**

**City of Lincoln City**

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES**

**Lincoln City, Oregon**

**Table of Contents**

- I. NOTICE
- II. MISSION
- III. VISION
- IV. PURPOSE OF RFQ
- V. BACKGROUND
- VI. OBJECTIVES
- VII. SCOPE OF WORK
- VIII. FUNDING, BUDGET & TERMS
- IX. SELECTION PROCESS
- X. EVALUATION CRITERIA
- XI. SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS
- XII. PROPOSAL CONTENTS
- XIII. ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS, NOTIFICATIONS AND INFORMATION

## **Explore Lincoln City**

### **City of Lincoln City**

## **REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**

### **PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES**

#### **NOTICE:**

Notice is hereby given that Lincoln City through Explore Lincoln City, will receive Proposals per specifications until **5:00 PM, Pacific Time, January 24, 2020** to provide: Public Relations Services. No Proposals will be received or considered after that time.

The resulting contract from this RFQ will have an initial term of Five (5) months through June 30, 2020, with three (3) additional one (1) year optional extensions thereafter subject to mutual agreement of the parties.

Proposal packets may be obtained at <https://www.oregoncoast.org/contact-us/>. Proposals are to be delivered to Explore Lincoln City by email to [lfrancis@lincolncity.org](mailto:lfrancis@lincolncity.org).

For questions : Liz Francis, [lfrancis@lincolncity.org](mailto:lfrancis@lincolncity.org), (541) 996-1272

Explore Lincoln City reserves the right to reject any and all Proposals not in compliance with public bidding procedures and requirements, and may reject for good cause any and all Proposals upon the finding that it is in the public interest to do so and to waive any and all informalities in the public interest. In the award of the contract, Explore Lincoln City will consider the element of time, will accept the Proposal or Proposals, which in their estimation, will best serve the interests of Lincoln City and will reserve the right to award the contract to the contractor whose Proposal shall be best for the public good.

#### **PURPOSE OF RFQ**

The purpose of this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is to select a qualified contractor to provide consultation with the City on general public relations matters. The prospective contractor replying to this RFQ will be or represent a firm, company or corporation possessing relevant experience and expertise. Supporting documentation must thoroughly describe how the contractor has supplied expertise for similar contracts and work in Public Relations, and how contractor would approach the needs outlined in the Scope of Work. A proven experience in municipal marketing/public relations is recommended.

The selected contractor will be retained for a 6-month trial period. Upon successful completion of the trial period, the contract will be renewed for a further three years,

dependent upon budget constraints.

**MISSION:** Strengthen Lincoln City's economic health by inspiring travel, encouraging overnight stays and stewarding brand identity as the trusted destination and trip planning resource.

**VISION:** A thriving and prosperous Lincoln City recognized as the preferred travel destination on the Oregon Coast

## **BACKGROUND**

Explore Lincoln City is the recognized Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Lincoln City. Explore Lincoln City carries out its mission through destination management, tourism promotion and visitor experience in Lincoln City and the surrounding area. Tourism works in partnership with members of the industry and with communities to develop and enhance local tourism assets and experiences. Explore Lincoln City works to balance the interests of visitors, businesses, other organizations, and government through innovative leadership and strategic investment of resources and staff.

Explore Lincoln City is funded by tax dollars generated from a city-wide transient room tax (TRT) of 9.5%. The annual funding available varies with the collection of TRT dollars. These tax dollars are to be used for the development and promotion of tourism in Lincoln City. The Explore Lincoln City Committee (ELCC) along with the Lincoln City City Council advise and oversee the programs and budget of Explore Lincoln City.

Explore Lincoln City employs a core staff of six (6) FTE. Explore Lincoln City's Director, along with the Marketing Manager, will be the primary point of contact for the PR Agency. In addition to two (2) administrative employees, Explore Lincoln City employs two (2) staff to manage and deliver our events, social media and content efforts.

The main objective in marketing is to deliver the Explore Lincoln City brand message to reach our audience of local, regional, national, and international markets. Our core advertising markets, accounting for 50% of our visitors comprises Portland and the balance of the Willamette Valley. Washington State, in aggregate, accounts for another 20% but is, for the most part, beyond the reach of our paid media budget. High potential growth markets include Idaho (Boise) and Northern California. Historically, our target audience is 24-65 years of age depending on seasonality; predominately leisure visitors; and some business and special group travel.

The Explore Lincoln City marketing campaigns have included a mix of print advertising (leisure and travel media), out of home (billboards, buses, commuter trains), digital (banners, video, SEM), social media, broadcast (target cable TV), sponsored editorial, and radio (traditional and digital).

## **OBJECTIVES**

Explore Lincoln City proposes to retain a highly qualified, capable firm to act as the full-service PR agency of record. Special consideration will be given to those agencies with proven destination marketing experience. The successful agency will work with Explore Lincoln City to leverage earned media in target markets to promote Lincoln City as the preferred beach vacation destination on the Oregon Coast. Priorities include activities that will inspire consumers to visit, experience, stay, and return to Lincoln City

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The Scope of Work is designed to encourage aggressive, proactive media outreach to increase visibility for Lincoln City, its events, activities, amenities and promotions. It will include but not be limited to the following:

1. Execute targeted public relations campaigns to generate feature articles, listings, and related publicity.
2. Conduct media outreach to target markets.
3. Write, format and distribute press releases, fact sheets and talking points to media.
4. Coordinate promotion and publicity for local events.
5. Organize and develop media assets.
6. Create story pitches and ideas.
7. Develop media familiarization tours and identify travel writer opportunities.
8. Support paid media campaigns through public relations.
9. Participate in regularly scheduled status meetings.
10. Create annual public relations plan, strategy and editorial calendar.
11. Track and measure earned media delivering comprehensive reports.

## **FUNDING, BUDGET & TERMS**

Funding of the work described herein will be determined by TRT collections and Explore Lincoln City as approved and authorized by the Lincoln City City Council. Explore Lincoln City will have the ability to consider any identified change in Retainer Services and associated fees for this service during the annual renewal process, as influenced by unperceived market changes. Each year, the awarded firm is expected to provide a detailed marketing budget to Explore Lincoln City outlining the anticipated annual costs of services prior to work commencing for that fiscal year. Explore Lincoln City does not expect these services to exceed more than 30 hours a month on average.

The term of the contract shall be from the effective date through June 30, 2019 with the option for three (3) additional one (1) year extensions thereafter subject to the mutual agreement of the parties.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

From a review of the statements of qualifications received, Explore Lincoln City intends to evaluate the proposals and possibly invite one or more firms to be interviewed before making a final selection of a firm for the project. Explore Lincoln City will notify selected firms of the date and times of any interviews. Explore Lincoln

City reserves the right to make a selection based solely on statements of qualifications received.

The preferred respondent whose selection was based on qualifications will then negotiate with Explore Lincoln City on fee and contract conditions. If a reasonable fee cannot be achieved with the respondent of choice, negotiations will proceed with other qualified respondents until a mutually agreed contract can be negotiated.

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Explore Lincoln City will review all Proposals that are initially deemed responsive and they shall rank the Proposals in accordance with the below criteria. Explore Lincoln City may recommend an award based solely on the written responses or may request Proposal interviews. Interviews, if deemed beneficial by the evaluation committee, will consist of the highest scoring Proposers. The invited Proposers will be notified of the time, place, and format of the interview. Based on the interview, Explore Lincoln City may revise their scoring.

Written Proposals must be complete, and no additions, deletions, or substitutions will be permitted during the interview (if any). The evaluation committee will recommend award of a contract to the final City decision maker based on the highest scoring Proposal. The City decision maker reserves the right to accept the recommendation, award to a different Proposer, or reject all Proposals and cancel the RFQ.

Proposers are not permitted to directly communicate with any member of the evaluation committee regarding this RFQ during the evaluation process.

<b><u>Evaluation Criteria – Written Response</u></b>	<b><u>Points Available</u></b>
Project Understanding & Management Strategy	20
Creative Approach	20
Qualifications Experience & References	20
Demonstrable Ability to Identify and Report Metrics	15
Overall Quality of Proposal	10
Proposed Pricing/Fees	15
Available Points	100

### **SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

Responses must observe submission instructions and be advised as follows:

Complete Proposals may be emailed directly to [lfrancis@lincolncity.org](mailto:lfrancis@lincolncity.org). The subject line of the email must clearly identify the RFQ title. Explore Lincoln City will provide confirmation that the Proposal has been received. **The Proposal must be received by 5:00 PM, Pacific Time on January 24, 2020.**

Explore Lincoln City reserves the right to solicit additional information or Proposal clarification from the vendors, or any one vendor, should the City deem such information necessary.

## **PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

To enable Explore Lincoln City to efficiently evaluate the responses, it is important that each response be submitted as outlined in this section. Please include an outside cover and/or first page, containing the name of the project followed by a Table of Contents. Provide the following information in the order in which it appears below:

### **Written Response**

#### **Agency Information**

---

- Provide basic information including agency name, addresses, and telephone number of all offices.
- Describe your organizational structure and size of agency.
- Provide general history of agency including number of years in business.
- Provide the name of agency principal(s) and primary contact

#### **Project Understanding & Management Strategy**

---

- Describe your agency's values and approach to client relationships and account management, including enough detail so Explore Lincoln City can determine that the agency has a thorough understanding of the services required by this project.
- Illustrate the firm's strategic and integrated planning process, in addition to proposing how the firm will approach this work with Explore Lincoln City.
- Indicate what you would characterize as key competitive challenges, opportunities, and trends that Explore Lincoln City should be mindful of relative to today's changing technologies and public relations environment

#### **Creative Approach**

---

- Include information on the agency's creative process, corporate culture, and what sets your capabilities apart from other agencies.
- Provide information on the steps that would be taken to create the public relations strategies for Lincoln City.
- Provide samples of work or case studies created for projects similar in size and scope that demonstrate the agency's creativity working across multiple channels (preference will be given to work presented that is of current agency employees who will be assigned to Explore Lincoln City's account).

#### **Qualifications, Experience & References**

---

- All team members (including subcontractors) included on the team shall be identified. Demonstrated levels of experience and available staff must be clearly stated.
- Provide background information describing your business, including a

comprehensive overview of your capabilities to provide the requested service, your ability to develop a tourism destination marketing organization's public relations campaign, and initial ideas that demonstrate how your agency's experience can benefit Lincoln City.

- Provide overview of how your agency measures and reports impact of public relations activities and ROI.
- Demonstrate your ability to manage aggressive project timelines while maximizing budgets.
- Provide a summary of public relations services of this nature provided to any current clients in Lincoln County, as well as tourism clients from outside the county. Provide a summary of experience with governmental accounts or non-profit agencies of similar size and scope as described in this solicitation.
- Provide a minimum of three references including contact names, dates that the services were provided, addresses and telephone numbers. At least two of the references must be current clients. References may be checked to verify the agency's ability to perform similar tasks.
- Indicate your knowledge of the tourism industry and the City of Lincoln City.
- Indicate your experience working with government agencies.

#### **Demonstrable Ability to Identify and Report Metrics**

- Syndicated and Internal Agency reporting systems
- Quantification of earned media efforts
- Ability to summarize and present earned media efforts for communication to ELC stakeholders

#### **Overall Quality of Proposal**

- The composition of the submitted proposal will be considered a reflection of the agency's work and approach to business.

#### **Proposed Pricing/Fees**

The pricing/fee component must include the total annual cost for the contract with break outs showing a schedule of prices for specific services: including the monthly retainer rate for services with a precise definition of expenses covered by the retainer, staff hourly charges, and commission. Specifically itemize:

- Monthly Retainer Services Fee
- Hourly and material rates for Non-Retainer Services
- Commission rates (if applicable)
- Travel expenses or reimbursements

#### **Additional Information**

- Provide any other information as part of your Proposal, which you believe to be important to the selection process.

**FINAL SELECTION WILL BE MADE BASED UPON THE COLLECTIVE POINTS AWARDED DURING THE WRITTEN AND ORAL PRESENTATIONS.**

**ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONS, NOTIFICATIONS AND INFORMATION**

- All Information True: By submitting a response, Respondents represent and warrant that all information provided in the response submitted shall be true, correct and complete. Respondents who provide false, misleading, or incomplete information, whether intentional or not, may be excluded.
- Proposals are deemed confidential until the "Notice of Intent to Award" letter is issued. This RFQ and one copy of each original Proposal received in response to it, together with copies of all documents pertaining to the award of a contract, will be kept and made a part of a file or record which will be open to public inspection.
- Cost of Responses: Explore Lincoln City will not be responsible for the costs incurred by anyone in the submittal of responses.
- Contract Negotiations: This RFQ is not a contract or a commitment of any kind. If this RFQ results in a contract offer by Explore Lincoln City, the specific scope of work, associated fees, and other contractual matters will be determined during contract negotiations.
- No Obligation: Explore Lincoln City reserves the right to evaluate responses submitted; waive any irregularities therein; select candidates for the submittal of more detailed or alternate proposals; accept any submittal or portion of submittal; reject any or all Respondents submitting responses; should it be deemed in Explore Lincoln City's best interest; or cancel the entire process.
- Professional Liability Insurance: The Respondent shall have the appropriate liability insurance certificate by an insurer authorized to transact insurance in the State of Oregon, to be submitted on an annual basis.