



BRATTLEBORO DEVELOPMENT CREDIT CORPORATION

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Point of Contact: Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation
Adam Grinold; Executive Director
76 Cotton Mill Hill
Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

Direct questions to: Laura Sibia at lsibia@brattleborodevelopment.com, no later than
September 19th, 2019

Questions will be addressed by September 20th, 2019

Date of Issue: September 3rd, 2019

Due Date: September 27th

Method of Submission: Via email to lsibia@brattleborodevelopment.com.¹

¹ Incomplete submissions will not be considered.

Request for Qualifications

Communications and Public Awareness Assessment

1.0 PURPOSE | BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) is seeking an experienced Consultant to conduct an assessment of its overall communications and general public awareness of the organization and its purpose.

BDCC is a private, nonprofit economic development organization that serves as a catalyst for industrial and commercial growth throughout Southeastern Vermont, including Windham County and the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg, Weston, and Winhall.

BDCC's primary objective is to create and retain a flourishing business community that supports vibrant fiscal activity and improves the quality of life of all its residents. Their goal is to assist start-up companies, growing companies, and global businesses alike, in order to support continued success stories in the region.

BDCC is affiliated with the State of Vermont as the certified Regional Development Corporation (RDC) serving the greater Windham County area. BDCC is one of the 12 RDCs throughout Vermont.

Additional information about BDCC may be obtained at www.brattleborodevelopment.com, including *Who We Are, What We Do, Where We Are, and Partnerships & Additional Resources*.

2.0 PROJECT OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF SERVICES

PROJECT OVERVIEW

BDCC is seeking an experienced Consultant to conduct an assessment of its communications and public awareness of the organization and to make recommendations for communications strategies that best align with regional stakeholder need and understanding. BDCC is seeking a qualified consulting firm with experience in solid market research, strategic planning, corporate identity, and rural and multi-faceted audiences to make recommendations for sustainable communications strategies that best align communications with regional stakeholder need.

In order to ensure the greatest impact for our organization, it is critical that we are able to translate stakeholder need into responsive solutions that are consistently and effectively communicated.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Investigate

- Interview staff and board members
 - Who is BDCC for, What does it do, Why does BDCC do it, Who are BDCC's partners?
- Conduct perception, program, and awareness survey of businesses, town leaders, regional and state cooperation, non-profits, students, and young professionals. Elements to test:
 - Who is BDCC for, What does it do, Why does BDCC do it, Who are BDCC's partners?
- Conduct one on one perception, program, and awareness interviews with investors, supporters, and detractors. Items to look for:
 - SWOT
- If the organization names are adding or detracting from understanding of what the organization does

Recommend

- Changes needed to better align stakeholder's perception with what BDCC does
- Actions to take and actions to avoid to increase trust and result in positive actions by our stakeholders
- A key communications activity for improving/better aligning perceptions for:
 - Businesses at various stages of growth
 - Town leaders
 - Regional and state cooperation
 - Non-profits
 - Students/young professionals
 - *BDCC and SeVEDS existence (why it matters)*
- *If a future name change is recommended*

Develop

- BDCC guidebook for staff on:
 - Recommendations for consistent use of communications for BDCC alone and for BDCC in conjunction/connection with its investors, affiliates, partners, and programs:
 - Written
 - Graphically
 - Presentations/events
- Key talking points and data points for our board members *and editorial committee*
- Recommend a sustainable and consistent schedule of public communication activities utilizing existing staff and highlighting
 - Key points to reinforce perceptions
 - Key points to change perceptions

3.0 CONSULTANT EXPERTISE AND PROPOSAL FORMAT

To properly assess each Respondent's qualifications for this project, BDCC requests that each Respondent respond with the following information in the order that it is presented below. **Responses must be limited to the experience of the branch office and/or individuals that will have direct responsibility for the execution of the Project.**

A. Cover Letter and Personnel

1. Cover letter with name, address, phone number, and email address of the contact person; identify the capacity this person has to conduct a Communications and Public Awareness Assessment, and to make recommendations for sustainable communications strategies that better align with regional stakeholder need.
2. Identify the project manager and the personnel to be assigned to this project, including names, address, current phone numbers, and email addresses. Include brief resumes for all team members, identify how many years this team has worked together, and provide a list of projects this team has completed or is currently working on.
3. Identify all sub-consultants and their role with this project, including names, addresses, current phone numbers, and email addresses, and include a brief resume of related experience, how long the sub-consultant has worked with the submitting consultant, and how many projects the sub-consultant has completed, or is currently working on with the submitting consultant.

B. Relevant Experience & Proposal Format

1. Background on the proposing firm and its experience with similar types of projects, especially for nonprofit entities, rural audiences, and organizations acting regionally.
2. A narrative that presents the service the firm would provide detailing the approach, methodology and deliverables, and client meetings.
3. A brief narrative describing the approach that the firm might use.
4. Description of the overall knowledge of Windham County, Southern Vermont.
5. A summary of any suggested approaches BDCC should consider in this effort.
6. A timeline for the preparation and implementation of the tasks being proposed per the "Scope of Services."
7. Cost proposal for entire project.

C. References

1. Provide references for other similar work

Preference shall be given to firms with experience in assessing communications and public awareness for nonprofit and regional organizations. In addition, firms that have a demonstrated knowledge of Windham County, Southern Vermont.

4.0 SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria that BDCC will use to evaluate the RFQs include the following:

1. The completeness of the submittal.
2. Relevant experience of the consultant on other similar types of work.
3. Prior experience assessing public awareness for cities or other mission driven clients.
4. Demonstrated success with varied means of gathering community members, staff, and board trustees' perceptions.
5. The degree to which the consultant illustrates its understanding of BDCC and the importance of a communication's assessment for the organization.
6. The quality of references.
7. Overall fit with BDCC's economic goals and efforts.
8. Ability of the Firm in terms of workload and availability of qualified personnel, equipment, and facilities to perform the required professional services competently and expeditiously.
9. Past performance of the Firm as reflected by the evaluation of previous clients with respect to such factors as, quality of work, dispute resolution, administration of subcontractors, meeting deadlines, and the past performance of the Firm.
10. Other qualifications that are consistent with the scope and needs of the Project including, but not limited to, knowledge of the local area, working relationships with local professionals, and the general response to the scope of work review.

5.0 Email of Interest

All Consultant Firms interested in receiving future notices related to the RFQ should email Laura Sibilia, Director of Regional Strategies, at lsibilia@brattleborodevelopment.com. The email should contain the Firm's name, contact person, mailing address, phone number, and email address. The purpose of the Email of Interest is to provide BDCC with a contact person to receive future notices related to this RFQ.

6.0 Selection Process

All statements submitted in response to the RFQ will be reviewed and evaluated based on the information contained in the responses, an investigation of the consultant's past projects and performance, and other pertinent factors.

In addition, BDCC will form an Evaluation Committee and reserves the right to request additional information as deemed necessary and appropriate. A recommendation will

be made to BDCC's Executive Director for the selection of the Communications and Public Awareness Consultant with whom BDCC will enter into a Professional Services Agreement. Proof of financial soundness and summary of professional liability insurance coverage will be required of the firm prior to final selection. BDCC intends to commence [work in early to mid-Fall 2019.]

7.0 Submission Format, Submittals, and Schedule

The Evaluation Committee, at its sole discretion, shall have the right to seek clarifications from each of the Respondents in order to fully understand the nature of the submissions and to evaluate and rank the Respondents.

A Respondent shall be considered responsive if the RFQ responds to all material aspects and contains no irregularities or deviations from the RFQ. Each Respondent that is rejected as nonresponsive will be notified of the finding that it was nonresponsive and the reasons for the finding in writing.

Interested consultants should submit one (1) electronic PDF version of the qualifications by September 27th. Incomplete and/or late submittals will not be accepted: Submittals should be delivered to: Laura Sibilgia, Director of Regional Strategies at lsibilgia@brattleborodevelopment.com.

September 3	RFP made available
September 20	Response to all questions
September 27	Deadline for receiving proposals (all material)
September 30	Proposals evaluated
December 31	All work completed

8.0 MISCELLANEOUS

1) Claims and Insurance Requirements: The consultant shall be solely responsible for all claims of whatever nature arising out of the rendering of services by the consultant during the term of the contract. The consultant shall indemnify and hold BDCC and other participants harmless against the same to the extent permitted by law.

2) BDCC reserves the right to withdraw this RFP, to accept or reject any or all qualifications, to advertise for new qualifications if it is in the best interest of BDCC to do so, and to award a contract as deemed to be in the best interest of BDCC.

3) All qualifications submitted in response to this RFP become the property of BDCC. BDCC has the right to disclose information contained in the qualifications after an award has been made. All reports, documents, and materials developed by the consultant for this project shall be considered public information and shall be the property of BDCC. All products and borrowed materials shall be delivered to BDCC's Point of Contact or its designee prior to final payment.