



Request for Proposals

Strategic Communications and Public Relations Support

Date Issued: **February 22, 2023**

Submission Due Date: **March 8, 2023**

RELEASED BY:



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Section I: Overview

This Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued by the Fund for Public Health in New York City (FPHNYC), on behalf of the New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene’s (NYC Health Department) Office of the Commissioner, to seek proposals from qualified consultants/firms to provide strategic communications and public relations support in advancing its broader public health agenda and building a communications operation better suited to respond to the elevated interest in public health.

A. Fund for Public Health in New York City

The Fund for Public Health in New York City (FPHNYC) was created in 2002 as an independent nonprofit organization with the purpose of connecting the NYC Health Department to private sector partners and the greater philanthropic community. These partnerships enable innovation that make our city healthier and safer for all.

The Fund will serve as the fiscal administrator for this contract opportunity.

B. RFP Timetable

Listed below are key events related to this RFP, from solicitation to contract execution. FPHNYC may amend the schedule, as needed. Any change will be made by means of an amendment to this RFP and will be posted on FPHNYC’s website (<https://fphnyc.org/get-involved/requests-proposals/>).

KEY DATES	
February 22, 2023	Release of Request for Proposals
March 1, 2023	Deadline for Written Questions
March 3, 2023	Q&A Posted
March 8, 2023	Deadline for Receipt of Proposals
on or about March 15, 2023	Expected Notice of Award
on or about March 27, 2023	Expected Contract Start Date

C. Applicant Eligibility

To be considered, individuals or firms submitting proposals must demonstrate the following:

- 7 to 10 years of experience providing strategic communications, public relations, public affairs, and media relations with preference given to experience relevant to local, state, or federal government agencies, hospitals/healthcare institutions, corporations and/or non-profit organizations or elected officials.
- Expertise in communication strategy, executive and crisis communications, and media training.
- Demonstrated thought leadership and ability to drive change.
- Priority will be given to Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises.

If awarded:

- Proposers must register as a vendor in the City’s Payee Information Portal (PIP) and PASSPort, the City’s Procurement and Sourcing Solutions Portal. Further detail on can be found in Section V: General Disclosures on page 13.
- Proposers must provide proof of required insurance coverage prior to the start of award. Further

detail can be found in Section V: Insurance on page 12.

D. Anticipated Contract Type

FPHNYC expects to negotiate a firm fixed fee and enter into a contract for services outlined in this RFP. The contract is expected to begin on or about March 27, 2022 and end no later than June 30, 2023. Funding for these services will be up to maximum (ceiling) value of \$220,000, including all fees and expenses. Actual award amount will be based upon the price proposal submitted by the Proposer. The contract may be renewed, based upon performance and need.

E. RFP Inquiries, Written Questions and Answers

Questions and requests for clarification about this RFP must be submitted via e-mail to procurement@fphnyc.org with the subject line of "Strategic Communications and Public Relations Services." All questions and inquiries must be received by March 1, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ET. Any questions received after the deadline may not be answered.

Responses to the questions received will be posted at: <https://fphnyc.org/get-involved/requests-proposals/>. It is the responsibility of each Proposer to check for any Q&A postings, and any other changes or updates posted regarding this RFP. Proposers are encouraged to check the webpage frequently to stay informed throughout the procurement process.

F. Submission Instructions

Completed proposals must be submitted via email to procurement@fphnyc.org no later than **Wednesday, March 8, 2023 at 11:59 p.m. ET.**

Please format all documents submitted in response to this RFP in .pdf (Portable Document Format) in accordance with the instructions specified in Section III Completing the Proposal on page 8. All submissions must be e-mailed to procurement@fphnyc.org with the following subject line:

Subject: Strategic Communications and Public Relations Services

Responses received after the deadline may be disqualified from funding consideration. It is the responsibility of the submitting entity to ensure delivery of the application to the above email address by the submission deadline. A confirmation of receipt of the proposal will be sent by email.

G. RFP Contact

For the purposes of this procurement process, the "RFP Contact" will be: Rebecca Adeskavitz, Chief Operations Officer, FPHNYC, at procurement@fphnyc.org. All questions and inquiries must be submitted in writing by the deadline stated above.

Respondents and their representatives are not permitted to contact any employees of FPHNYC and/or DOHMH, other than the RFP Contact, concerning matters regarding this RFP. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in the disqualification of the Respondent and the rejection of the Respondent's proposal.

Section II: Scope of Services

A. Background

With an annual budget of \$1.6 billion and more than 6,000 employees throughout the five boroughs, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) is one of the largest public health agencies in the world. DOHMH is one of the nation's oldest public health agencies, with more than 200 years of leadership in the field.

In addition to addressing everyday public health needs, DOHMH is facing a number of emerging and complex public health issues. They range from obesity, diabetes and heart disease to HIV/AIDS, tobacco addiction, substance use and the threat of bioterrorism. DOHMH is also working to address enduring gaps in health between white New Yorkers and communities of color. Structural racism is at the root of these health inequities, which is why DOHMH has made racial justice a priority. DOHMH is tackling these issues with innovative policies and programs.

B. Purpose

In 2022, DOHMH completed an internal strategic planning process through which the Agency has identified several priority areas critical to advancing New Yorkers' health and well-being, reducing health disparities, and addressing emergent threats and vulnerabilities. In the coming months, DOHMH will be launching several key initiatives to operationalize these priorities.

DOHMH is seeking a vendor to assist the Agency with the development of strategic communications capabilities for the agency. The selected vendor will work with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene in developing a strategic communications program, including the appropriate infrastructure and capabilities that will enable the Agency to communicate critical public health information in compelling ways to key audiences, to drive progress and achievement of population health goals.

B. Scope of Work

DOHMH is seeking an experienced consultant to deliver communications and public relations/affairs support in the following areas:

- I. Development and launch of DOHMH and citywide health plans
- II. Public affairs and press relations
- III. Executive communications capacity development and training
- IV. Assessment of agency communications infrastructure
- V. Assessment of agency digital communications infrastructure and impact
- VI. Development of a proactive communications strategy around DOHMH's priority areas as defined in its recently completed strategic plan

Key activities and deliverables of the agreement will include the following:

I. Development and launch of DOHMH and citywide health plans

In the coming months, DOHMH plans to launch at least two framework documents including a Population Health Agenda/Healthy NYC and a Chronic Disease Prevention and Food Systems Plan. The selected consultant/firm will assist with developing and launching these plans by:

- Strategizing with the internal DOHMH team on development of plan products, analysis of key audiences, and comprehensive approach for release of plans.
- Developing rollout strategies for each plan with specific timing, storylines, outlets, and contacts.

II. **Public Affairs and press relations**

The selected consultant/firm will support DOHMH's Public Affairs/Press team in enhancing the agency's communications impact by:

- Participating in weekly press strategy meetings and team meetings
- Crafting press releases for news-worthy studies and initiatives
- Developing recommendations memos for department priority areas
- Reviewing op-eds and commentary articles
- Developing pitch documents for potential stories
- Identifying appropriate media opportunities and interviews for agency leaders

III. **Executive communications capacity development and training**

The selected consultant/firm vendor will help DOHMH build its executive communications capability by:

- Helping the agency implement an executive communications practice as part of its overall communications strategy. This will include developing an executive communications framework for the agency including goals, scope, and staffing complement and skill sets.
- Providing message and media training for the Commissioner of Health as needed

IV. **Assessment of agency communications infrastructure**

As part of DOHMH's strategic planning process, the Office of External Affairs is considering structural changes to enhance the Office's efficiency and effectiveness, as well as improve how the Division interfaces with communications-focused staff across the agency. The selected consultant/firm will assist with this process by:

- Attending routine Communications meetings to understand current process, functions, and capabilities to inform recommendations
- Working with leadership of the Division of External Affairs to optimally design the structure of the communications team
- Assisting with development of job descriptions for vacant and newly created positions
- Making recommendations regarding internal processes related to development of publications, reports, media campaigns and other communications products
- Making recommendations regarding points of interface between communications staff within programs/bureaus and central communications staff

V. **Assessment of agency digital communications infrastructure and impact**

The selected consultant/firm will assist DOHMH improve its digital communications impact by:

- Attending routine meetings with DOHMH's digital team to understand the agency's digital footprint and processes to inform recommendations
- Analyzing current social and digital media accounts of agency leaders
- Conducting a landscape analysis of DOHMH's digital footprint
- Reviewing and commenting on digital media plans related to specific events and initiatives

VI. **Develop proactive communications strategy around DOHMH's priority areas as defined in its recently completed strategic plan**

The selected consultant/firm will help DOHMH develop key messaging, validator engagement strategies, partnership opportunities, earned media ideas, and other communications vehicles for the following priorities identified as part of the agency's strategic planning process:

- Improving chronic disease outcomes

- Reduction of Black maternal mortality
- Mitigating the health impacts of climate change
- Addressing the second pandemic of mental health with three priority populations: drug users, those with Serious Mental Illness and youth
- Bridging healthcare and public health to achieve population health goals
- The future of public health – and the leadership role that DOHMH/NYC should play

Section III: Completing the Proposal

A. Content of Proposal

Proposals shall include, at a minimum, the following information in the order provided below:

1. **Proposal Submission Form (Attachment A)**
2. **IRS Form W-9 with Employer Identification Number (EIN)**
3. **Price Proposal** - Provide your firm's proposed cost along with payment schedule and a detailed narrative description of what is included in the cost.

4. Proposal Narrative

I. Minimum Requirements

Proposers should provide evidence of meeting the minimum qualifications outlined below:

- a. 7 to 10 years of experience providing strategic communications, public relations, public affairs, and media relations with preference given to experience relevant to local, state, or federal government agencies, hospitals/healthcare institutions, corporations and/or non-profit organizations or elected officials.
- b. Expertise in communication strategy, executive and crisis communications, and media training.
- c. Demonstrated thought leadership and ability to drive change.

II. Organizational Capacity & Experience

Proposers should provide a statement of qualifications and capability to perform the services sought by this RFP, including:

- a. Brief overview of your agency, including history/years of operation, types of services provided, structure, etc.
- b. A detailed capability statement that demonstrates your agency's capacity and resources to plan, coordinate, and implement the proposed scope of work, including success in completing projects of a similar size and scope.
- c. Provide resumes or bios for key personnel that would be assigned to this project. The resumes should describe those individuals' background, expertise, strengths, and ability to support DOHMH.
- d. Three (3) references representing related past work and experiences. Contact information must include: Name, Place of Business, Address, Phone Number, Email Address, and a brief description of the project.
- e. Provide at least 3 examples of strategic plans, press releases, and other materials from previous projects.

III. Project Approach

Proposers should provide a detailed and comprehensive description of how they intend to provide the services requested in this RFP, including:

- a. General approach and strategies to complete the proposed scope of work.
- b. Overall work plan with deliverables, time estimates, and staffing structure.
- c. Describe any potential barriers or challenges, and how you plan to overcome these challenges.

B. Proposal Format Requirements

- Font: 12 point – Times New Roman
- Spacing: Single
- Margins: 1 inch
- Paper: 8 ½ x 11
- File Format: PDF
- Label the beginning of each section as indicated (e.g., “Project Approach”) and include each question number and letter.

Please submit only requested information and attachments. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a deduction of up to ten (10) points.

Section IV: Evaluation and Award Procedures

All proposals submitted within the stated deadline will be reviewed to determine if they meet the minimum requirements of this RFP and have responded to all necessary questions and requests. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate and rate all qualified proposals based on the Evaluation Criteria described below.

A. Evaluation Criteria

A selection committee at NYC Health Department will review proposals, interview Proposers, and select one Proposer for this project based on qualifications and the strength of the proposed approach. The relative weight of each section is:

Organization Capacity & Experience	50 points
Project Approach	40 points
Price Proposal	10 points
Total	100 points

B. Selection Process

The selection process consists of the following steps:

1. Adherence to Mandatory Minimum Requirements

All proposals will undergo an initial administrative review for completeness. For a proposal to be evaluated, it must be responsive (i.e., include all required components) and the Proposer must meet all required eligibility criteria.

2. Proposal Evaluation

All responsive applications will be reviewed by a panel convened by the NYC Health Department. The panel will evaluate applications and score Proposers according to the criteria listed above. Each application will be scored by at least three reviewers and scored on a scale of 0—100. After review, the panel will compile scores and rank applications according to final weighted scores.

After initial scoring, the Committee may decide to interview select Proposers in order to further clarify their proposed approach and experience. In the event that interviews are held, they must be conducted by the team that will be working on the contract should it be awarded, including the project lead. The interviews will be conducted by phone, teleconference, or in person at the discretion of FPHNYC and DOHMH.

Proposers with an average score below 50 will not be considered for an interview or award. The Committee will select the Proposer with the best score and interview for references checks and subsequent contracting, pending satisfactory feedback.

C. Award Process

Each Proposer applying will be notified in writing regarding the decision concerning their proposal. Once the selection is made, the designated recipient will enter a contract with FPHNYC. Final contract execution is contingent upon successful completion of contract negotiations and demonstrated compliance with all

requirements of FPHNYC, NYC Health Department, the City of New York, and/or any other applicable federal and state laws and policies.

Section V: General Disclosures

Right to Amend or Cancel this RFP, or Solicit a New RFP

FPHNYC may amend or cancel this RFP at any time, without any liability to FPHNYC, and/or DOHMH. FPHNYC or DOHMH may solicit new requests for information and/or proposals regarding the services addressed in this RFP at any time.

Right to Reject Proposals

FPHNYC may reject any or all proposals received and may ask for further clarification or documentation. Submitted information that does not respond to all items in this RFP may be excluded from further consideration and alternative information packages may not be considered.

Insurance

Contractor agrees to maintain, at all times during the life of this Contract the following applicable coverage's and limits:

- a. Commercial General Liability: insurance to provide coverage for bodily injury and property damage, including damage to any facilities, equipment or vehicles, in limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate, \$1,000,000 personal and advertising injury aggregate; written on an occurrence basis with coverage at least as broad as the most recently-issue version of ISO form CG 00 01, and no exclusions other than as required by law or approved in writing by DOHMH.
- b. Professional Liability (Medical Malpractice): if Contractor is providing professional services, Contractor shall obtain professional liability insurance, in limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$3,000,000 aggregate;
- c. Employers Liability: insurance to provide coverage for the acts and omissions of Contractor's employees in limits of no less than \$1,000,000 per accident;
- d. Workers' Compensation: workers' compensation and disability insurance as required by the applicable New York State law.
- e. Commercial Auto: if Contractor plans to use any vehicles in the performance of services under the agreement, Contractor shall obtain commercial auto coverage for all owned, non-owned, and hired vehicles, written on a form at least as broad as ISO form CA 00 01, with minimum limits of \$1,000,000 per accident.
- f. Excess Umbrella Liability: in the event that Contractor's insurance policy(s) does not meet the limits stated above.

Contractor shall maintain on file with FPHNY current Certificates of Insurance for the above referenced policies, listing FPHNY and the City as Additional Insureds for General Liability policies and as Certificate Holders for all other required insurance.

NYC Vendor Registration

This project is being supported with funding from the NYC Health Department, which requires that vendors register in the City's Payee Information Portal (PIP). In PIP, vendors can view financial transactions with the City of New York, register for Electronic Funds Transfer payments and more. For more information, please visit: <https://a127-pip.nyc.gov/webapp/PRDPCW/SelfService>.

Vendors will also be required to register in PASSPort, the City's digital procurement system. PASSPort training and information materials are available through videos, user guides and FAQs at www.nyc.gov/passport.

COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements

Contractors will be required to comply with all New York City Executive Orders and Orders of the Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene ("City Orders") that apply to City contractors and subcontractors. The Contractor shall also be responsible for ensuring that the Contractor remains current with all such City Orders and requirements, which may be subject to change.

Proposal Costs

The Proposer will be solely responsible for any costs incurred in preparing, delivering, or presenting responses to this RFP. Proposers will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred in preparing proposals.

Fulfillment of Requirements

By submitting an information package, the Proposer acknowledges that the respondent has read and understands this RFP and can fulfill all requirements.

Submitted Information

Once submitted, responses will be the property of FPHNYC and will not be returned.