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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
MARKETING & PROGRAM OUTREACH FOR
YOUTH NAVIGATOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

RELEASE: MAY 1, 2024
PROPOSALS DUE: MAY 29, 2024

ESTIMATED PROJECT BUDGET: not to exceed \$100,000

I. INTRODUCTION:

RochesterWorks (hereafter, also "RWI") is seeking proposals from experienced and qualified advertising agencies or entities to promote its WIOA Youth Navigator program, with an overarching goal of increasing enrollment in the program. RWI seeks to increase both inquiries to program from prospective participants as well as increase online traffic to its primary website containing information about the program (<https://rochesterworks.org/services/for-youth>).

II. COMPANY BACKGROUND

Founded in 2004, RochesterWorks is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit member of the American Job Center Network that provides employment and training services to Monroe County through three local career centers and one specialized youth employment center. RWI administers workforce development programming on behalf of the Monroe County-Rochester Workforce Development Board (hereafter, also the "Board"). As required by the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (hereafter, "WIOA") the Board sets policy for the local workforce development system, serving both job seekers in Monroe County, as well as employers. The Board, which is administered by RWI staff, is directly responsible for determining the best use of local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds.

RochesterWorks, on behalf of the Board and under its oversight, administers approximately \$1.9 million in WIOA Youth funding, which provides a variety of **free** services and training to Youth job seekers (ages 14-24) including, but not limited to: career exploration, counseling, assessment, classroom training, and paid work experience. WIOA Youth funding is intended to serve individuals with barriers to employment, and thus, the primary universe of RWI's WIOA Youth programming includes individuals living in poverty, particularly in the City of Rochester.

RWI's Youth Navigator program, which is widely regarded as one of the most innovative and effective WIOA Youth programs in New York State, serves youth between the ages of 16 and 24, who are no longer in school. In the years after the pandemic, RWI faced new challenges in recruiting program participants, which is likely due to a combination of factors, including but not limited to a collective increase in barriers to employment for the target population, specifically related to mental health and the impacts of gun violence in Rochester since 2021, as well as an increase in the number of non-RWI programs serving the target population.

III. GENERAL SERVICES SOUGHT

The firm selected to partner with RochesterWorks will be responsible for a scope of services that includes:

- Creating a media campaign strategy (hereafter, the "campaign") to promote the Youth Navigator program, using a combination of strategies and mediums.
- Assisting RochesterWorks staff with developing more focused branding for the Youth Navigator program.
- Identifying best means to reach and connect with the target population: Monroe County residents, ages 16-24, who are not working and not attending school that could benefit from offered programs and services such as vocational exploration, career counseling, skill assessment, classroom training, and paid work experience.
- Effectively communicating to the target audience, the pertinent details of the Youth Navigator Program, enabling prospective participants to learn about what opportunities are available to them, with the ultimate goal of maximizing the number of inquiries and successful enrollments into the Youth Navigator program.
- Producing creative content, which may include, but is not limited to, the production of promotional videos for both paid broadcast television purchases and social media placement; graphic design for print and electronic distribution; development of social media templates for sustained use beyond the campaign; logo and program tag line.
- Capturing and acquiring permission to use images of and testimonials from current and past participants who have benefited from the Youth Navigator program, including employer partners.

- If desired by RWI, negotiating with advertising media outlets for paid media buys.
- Providing RWI with detailed analytics reports presenting and explaining pertinent analytics, including but not limited to the number of impressions generated through various platforms and outlets during the campaign. These analytics reports shall be provided monthly, after the start of the campaign.

The campaign will run from the date of the award (estimated July 1st, 2024) – September 30th, 2024.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

RochesterWorks seeks a strategic partnership with a firm that has experience in developing and executing media campaign focusing on the primary target population: underserved youth, particularly those living in distressed communities with higher rates of unemployment.

The consultant will report to RochesterWorks' Communications and Marketing Manager.

As it relates to this campaign, RWI is responsible for updating the any websites that contain information about its programming as well as avenues for enrollment in WIOA Youth Programming.

RochesterWorks will provide the selected bidder(s) with guidelines and restrictions on the manners in which the funds can be utilized, pursuant to WIOA and New York State Department of Labor guidelines. RWI will provide the consultant with any necessary and accurate program information, including but not limited to program descriptions, contact information, population served, and statistical information.

As part of its work, the consultant will provide RWI with a monthly report consisting of pertinent analytics, including but not limited to the number of impressions generated through various platforms and outlets utilized in the campaign.

RochesterWorks reserves ownership rights and privileges to content created as part of the campaign, including but not limited to video, print, or radio advertisements; print brochures, logo and social media graphics; and any other content captured or generated by the consultant with the purpose of creating marketing material (i.e., video b-roll, images from photo shoots).

As the subgrantee of WIOA funding, RochesterWorks is subject to the oversight of the US Department of Labor, which issued a [technical advisory](#) in 2023 providing guidance for local workforce boards who wish to engage in program outreach (marketing), particularly that done through paid advertising. While WIOA is generally permissive in allowing workforce boards to promote programs and services to increase participation among priority populations, USDOL guidance does largely restrict using WIOA funds for general brand promotion. Therefore, any marketing campaign must clearly identify a program (in this case, the Youth Navigator program).

V. AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

Available funds for the campaign are: \$100,000. This is inclusive of any costs associated with the purchase of advertising time and/or placement.

RochesterWorks reserves the right to distribute the anticipated award to a single bidder or among any or all bidders.

Funding will be for the period based on the date of the award **and will end September 30th, 2024.**

RWI reserves the right to modify the scope of the program to any extent necessary to ensure compliance with State and/or Federal guidelines, as well as in accordance with a decrease in funding. In the case of a decrease in funding, contracts may be reduced in length, scope, or funding if deemed necessary by RWI.

This RFP does not commit RWI to award any contract. RWI reserves the right to accept and/or reject any and all proposals. Funds provided shall not be used to duplicate facilities or services available in the area with or without reimbursement from Federal, State, or local sources. No funds may be used for any lobbying activities.

VI. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENT

Responses to this RFP shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. **Background and Approach.** Provide RWI with information about your organization and overview of your firm's approach to designing and executing marketing and public outreach campaigns, particularly with community-based organizations that provide programming to underserved populations. Responses should also include general strategies for how it will

culturally tailor the campaign to ensure it effectively reaches and engages the intended audience.

- b. **Experience.** Share your firm's experience designing and executing marketing and public outreach campaigns, particularly with community-based organizations that provide programming to underserved populations. If applicable, responses should highlight experience marketing to the primary target population: young adults living in distressed communities.
- c. **Campaign Framework/Design.** While not providing a comprehensive and detailed marketing campaign plan, interested firms are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding of what a successful marketing campaign for the Youth Navigator program might entail. This may include references to which mediums might be successful in engaging the target population and meeting projected ROI.
- d. **Budget.** RochesterWorks has budgeted \$100,000 for this campaign. We do not seek a final budget at this stage of the process, but rather an estimate of how the available funds budgeted for this campaign could effectively be utilized to provide the greatest return on investment (ROI). Interested firms are encouraged, however, to itemize their estimated hourly design and production costs for marketing material and general campaign development.
- e. **Portfolio Examples.** Interested firms should submit portfolio samples that highlight a familiarity with executing marketing campaigns with organizations similar to RochesterWorks and/or this particular demographic population.
- f. **References.** Please provide at least three (3) client references.

VII. RFP/ PROJECT TIMELINE

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| RFP Release | May 1, 2024 at 4:00 pm |
| Deadline to Submit Written Questions | May 15 th , 2024 at 4:00 pm |
| Answers to RFP Questions Published | May 22 nd , 2024 at 4:00 pm |
| Proposal Due Date | May 29 th , 2024 |
| Proposal Review and Follow-up Interviews | June 3 rd – June 13 th , 2024 |
| Award of Contract | June 18 th , 2024 |
| Tentative Project Launch | March 25 th , 2024 |
| Tentative Website Launch | July 30 th , 2024 |

Pursuant to its procurement policy, RochesterWorks will interview prospective consultants after an initial review of proposals.

VIII. SCORING OF PROPOSALS

Proposals shall be scored based on the following criteria:

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| A. Background about your organization and general approach in developing and executing marketing campaigns. | 20 points |
| B. Experience working with community-based organizations similar to RochesterWorks. | 5 points |
| C. Campaign framework that identifies prospective marketing strategies, tactics, and mediums that will help meet the goals of this RFP. | 25 points |
| D. Project budget, including a detailed hourly rate of costs for services provided by the consultant, as well as an estimate of costs associated with paid media. | 25 points |
| E. Quality of portfolio examples provided. | 20 points |
| F. Listing of three (3) client references, particularly organizations for whom the firm has provided services similar to the scope of work outlined above. | 5 points |

IX. Application Process

Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to Tricia Campbell (tcampbell@rochesterworks.org) no later than May 15th, 2024 at 4:00 pm EST.

Final responses to this RFP must be submitted via email to Tricia Campbell (tcampbell@rochesterworks.org) no later than May 29th, 2024 at 4:00pm EST.