



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):
Website and Social Media Development
November 16, 2023**

SUBMISSION DEADLINE

Thursday, December 14, 2023 at Noon (EST)

SUBMISSION CONTACT AND ADDRESS

Ms. Cynthia van Zelm
Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Inc.
860-429-2740
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Proposals will be accepted in electronic form only.

PURPOSE

Connecticut's Countryside, the four towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield and Tolland, have initiated a Request for Proposals ("RFP") process to identify a qualified consultant ("Consultant") to further implement Connecticut's Countryside Marketing Implementation Plan prepared with DKA (Dornenburg Kallenbach Advertising). The Consultant can be an individual or part of an agency or team.

ABOUT ACTION PLAN FOR ECONOMIC VITALITY FOR THE TOWNS OF BOLTON, COVENTRY, MANSFIELD, AND TOLLAND

The Towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield, and Tolland partnered to create a regional Action Plan for Economic Vitality. This Action Plan explores new opportunities that align with a unified regional vision to better develop and promote key industry areas and to grow strategic partnerships, with the end goal of retention, expansion, and attraction of businesses to and within the region. As these businesses become more successful, the region will see job growth, increased investment, and increased tax revenue at the local level. The following are key focuses of this Action Plan:

- Outdoor recreation
- Agriculture and agri-tourism
- Culture and entertainment
- Entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Visibility and marketing
- Partnering with regional higher education institutions
- Plan administration

To review the Action Plan see this [link](#).

ABOUT MARKETING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

As a next step, in 2022, the four towns engaged DKA to develop a Marketing Implementation Plan. To access, the Plan, click [here](#).

As part of the Marketing Implementation Plan, a brand was developed (Connecticut's Countryside) with an accompanying logo; a brochure highlighting the region was produced; and a destination website was put in place. The link to the brochure is [here](#). The Consultant will work directly with Connecticut's Countryside staff team, and initially with Dr. Tim Liptrap of Nichols College who has developed the website (ctcountryside.org). Mr. Liptrap is also available during the submission process and can be contacted at his e-mail address of tim.liptrap@nichols.edu.

A video is being finalized to promote Connecticut's Countryside as well.

OBJECTIVES

The stage is set for further marketing of Connecticut's Countryside. Additional work is needed to promote the brand in order to meet the objectives of the Action Plan to increase visitors to the region, support our current businesses, and bring in new businesses to Connecticut's Countryside.

SCOPE OF WORK & DELIVERABLES

The project is expected to include providing further content and editing for the website, first year maintenance of the website with a plan for on-going maintenance; and development of a social media plan. The Consultant will work with Connecticut's Countryside staff team and provide deliverables to Connecticut Countryside's Steering Committee at key milestones. A specific plan for working with the staff team and Steering Committee will be laid out in the kick off meeting with the staff team.

Products and services will include:

1. Review of Action Plan for Economic Vitality for the Towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield, and Tolland including the Implementation Matrix
2. Review of Marketing Implementation Plan
3. Further content development of website including images, an events calendar, itineraries (i.e., hiking, biking, antiquing, farm stores/farmers markets, etc.), and other content as reviewed with Connecticut's Countryside team
4. One year maintenance of website and subsequent training manual for on-going maintenance done by others
5. Development and implementation of social media plan

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

The Consultant shall demonstrate a strong understanding of non-profits or municipalities, their general structure and operations, and proven experience in marketing, promotion, website development/maintenance, social media, and graphic design activities.

Demonstration of at least five (5) consecutive years of experience in the field of marketing, promotion, website development/maintenance, social media, and graphic design. Experience working with municipal or quasi-municipal clients is preferred.

Proposals shall include the following, in tabbed/bookmarked sequence:

1. General Information

- a. **Contact information:** Name of Consultant/firm, mailing address, phone number, email address and website.
- b. **Interest:** What interests you about this opportunity and what differentiates your creative process and experience from others.

2. Narrative, Qualifications, & References

- a. **Opening:** Your approach and methodology to marketing, promotion, website development/maintenance, social media, and graphic design and applying it to the Action Plan and Marketing Implementation Plan.
- b. **Qualifications:** Relevant work activities, knowledge, and experience. Experience should include specific examples of similar related nonprofit work. Please note any prior experience assisting municipal or quasi-municipal clients in the area of work related to the Marketing Implementation Plan. Some key qualifications that will be considered:
 - i. Education
 - ii. Experience in successfully developing and maintaining websites, social media, and marketing plans
 - iii. Knowledge of collaborative processes
 - iv. Experience in managing a creative project development process
- c. **Your Team:** Information about all team members who will be involved with the project, including names, email addresses, title, experience and education.
- d. **References:** Three client references (please include each individual's name, address, phone number, email address and relationship to the bidder).

3. Project Plan & Budget

- a. **Work Plan:** Detailed work plan, to include:
 - i. List of meetings and milestones in each phase
 - ii. Specific activities to be conducted in each phase
 - iii. Schedule (duration) of the activities in each phase
 - iv. List of deliverables in each phase
- b. **Budget:** Detailed project budget (including estimated hours by individual or team member and proposed payment schedule/terms). **The anticipated budget for this effort is \$5,000 to \$10,000.**

4. Attachments & Supporting Documents

- a. **Work samples:** At least one sample of a previously completed website and social media campaign. Portions may be redacted to protect private information as needed.
- b. **Supporting documents:** As applicable.

All proposals must be formatted in 8.5" x 11" pages and submitted electronically **by Thursday, December 14 at Noon (EST)** to vanzelmca@mansfieldct.org as a single PDF file not exceeding 15 MB in total size. The subject line in the e-mail should say "**Website and Social Media Development Proposal.**" Mailed copies of proposals will NOT be accepted.

All proposers are welcome to submit questions regarding this RFP electronically to vanzelmca@mansfieldct.org **by Thursday, December 14 at Noon EST.** The subject line in the e-mail should say "**Questions: Website and Social Media Development Proposal.**" Questions received by phone or fax or after this time will not be answered. All questions and answers will be posted to the Town of Mansfield's website (mansfieldct.gov) with their corresponding answers by Thursday, December 7 at Noon EST.

EVALUATION, NOTIFICATION & TIMELINE

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated by Connecticut's Countryside staff team based upon qualifications, scope of work, work plan, and budget.

Notification of Selection

Upon evaluation of proposals and contacting professional references, all proposers will receive written notification regarding their proposal and interviews may be scheduled with more than one finalist. A final recommendation will be submitted for approval by the Connecticut's Countryside Steering Committee and is not subject to appeal. The selected finalist will be notified of an intent to award.

Additional information may be required from the selected applicant prior to the awarding of the project. The Connecticut Countryside's Steering Committee reserves the right not to select a proposal if it is deemed insufficiently responsive to the service need. In the event no proposal is selected, Connecticut's Countryside may elect to issue a new RFP.

Timeline

Thursday, November 16, 2023	Release RFP
Thursday, November 30, 2023 by Noon EST	Deadline for Questions
Thursday, December 7, 2023 by Noon EST	Questions and Answers Posted
Thursday, December 14, 2023 by Noon EST	Deadline for Receipt of Proposals

Please see required Standard Terms and Conditions in Appendix A.

APPENDIX A: STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Consultants shall be aware of the following terms and conditions addressing Requests for Proposals for Connecticut's Countryside:

1. The Towns of Bolton, Coventry, Mansfield and Tolland ("The Towns") do not expressly state or imply any obligation to reimburse firms for any expenses incurred in preparing submissions in response to this request.
2. The Towns reserve the right to reject any or all submissions, to select a firm in a manner that is advantageous to the Towns, and to waive any or all formalities in the bidding.
3. The Towns do not and shall not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability of the Consultant, its employees, or its contractors in the award to the successful Consultant.
4. The selected firm must be able to meet all Towns, state, and federal affirmative action and equal employment opportunity practices and guidelines.
5. The Towns reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, to consider alternatives, to award the contract to a Consultant in part or parts, to waive any informalities and irregularities, and to re-solicit proposals, at its sole discretion.
6. The Towns reserve the right to conduct such investigations of and discussions with those who have submitted proposals ("Consultants") or other persons or entities as deemed necessary to assist in the evaluation of any proposal or to secure maximum clarification and completeness of any proposal.
7. All proposals submitted must be valid for a minimum period of sixty (60) days after the date of the proposal opening. Each Consultant must submit with the proposal a list of all subcontractors, independent contractors, or sub-consultants employed or proposed to be employed by the Consultant in the performance of the contract.
8. The Towns reserve the right to select the most responsible and responsive proposal that it finds to be within the best interests of the Towns, including the right to select a Consultant for reasons other than lowest price.
9. The Towns make no guarantees to any Consultant. The only obligations to be undertaken by the Towns will be those contained in the negotiated contract with the successful Consultant.
10. All work product generated by Consultant will be the property of the Towns, including without limitation all rights to reproduce, license, assign, sell, and otherwise use the work product in any form, size, format, or medium for any purpose. Consultant will convey and assign all rights of ownership and authorship in the work product to the Towns.
11. The Consultant will agree not to discriminate through the services or activities made possible by or resulting from any future contract on the grounds of sex, race, color, creed, national origin, age (except minimum age and retirement provisions), marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. Any violation of this provision shall be considered to be a violation of a material provision of any future contract and shall be grounds for cancellation, termination, or suspension of said contract. The Consultant shall at all times, both in the proposal and in the contract process, comply with all applicable city, state, and federal anti-discrimination laws, rules, regulations, and requirements thereof.