

Request for Proposals: Marketing and Public Relations Firm
Issued: September 30, 2024
Response Due: October 11, 2024

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (“RFP”) is to engage a firm to support the marketing and public relations needs of Community Desk Chicago.

COMMUNITY DESK CHICAGO BACKGROUND

Community Desk Chicago (“The Desk”), a 501(c)3, works with nonprofits, community developers and entrepreneurs to assemble the necessary capital, expertise and other resources to increase real estate development in their neighborhoods that promote a high quality of life.

The Desk’s long-term vision is a Chicago where all communities have the resources they need to create healthy built environments that support their goals for vibrant spaces, positive economic activity, and community wealth-building.

The Desk’s work is centered around three strategic pillars including 1) leveraging and coordinating place-based capital for real estate projects, 2) supporting small-scale commercial real estate development in neighborhood business districts and 3) advocating for systems change that reduce barriers to advancing community development goals. More information about the Desk can be found at www.communitydeskchicago.org.

As Chicago’s unofficial “help desk” for community development projects, it’s imperative that The Desk’s brand continues to reflect the organization as an approachable resource for communities but also knowledgeable and experienced to maintain trust with key funders and partners (e.g., philanthropy, City of Chicago).

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Outlined below are the services currently required by The Desk. Respondent is welcome to recommend other marketing and PR services that would benefit

Electronic and Print Media

- **Newsletters:** The Desk produces a quarterly newsletter to highlight our work. Mailchimp is used to distribute the newsletter. The selected firm will support the content development and packaging. A sample of our newsletter can be found [here](#).

- **Publications:** The Desk produces various publications from our [CIV Playbook](#) to our strategic plan. The selected firm will support the design and packaging of various publications.
- **Marketing Materials:** The Desk requires broad marketing materials including 1-pagers, case studies and other program-related materials. The selected firm will support the production of these materials.
- **Announcements:** The Desk sends announcements and notifications to our mailing list for various events and general notifications. The selected firm will support the design and development of these announcements.
- **Website:** The Desk utilizes [LeadTooth](#) to manage our website including major design edits. Occasionally, the selected firm will support messaging, content creation and design.

Brand Messaging and Framing

- **Messaging:** The Desk has an existing messaging framework. However, it needs to be updated. The selected firm will revisit the existing messaging to help ensure it aligns with leadership’s current vision for the organization.
- **Storytelling and Testimonials:** The selected firm will assist with capturing stories and testimonials related to the Desk’s current work to bring visibility to The Desk and its clients in advance of anticipated fundraising efforts.

Social Media

- **Graphic Design:** The Desk maintains both an [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#) page. The selected firm will assist the Desk in creating the necessary graphics for announcements and acknowledge on these media platform.

Public Relations Coordination

- **Media Relations:** The selected firm will coordinate communications with media outlets including but not limited to preparing press releases, securing interviews, preparing talking points, etc.

Event Support

- **Event Planning:** The Desk hosts events such as “meet and greets”, panel discussions and others. The selected firm will support the coordination of those events including preparing event announcements, coordinating with staff on event logistics, securing any media coverage, etc..

Client Support

- **Marketing Assistance:** Occasionally the Desk will provide marketing and PR support to our clients. The selected firm will assist as needed with press releases, print materials, etc. The time incurred for this assistance will be covered by the Desk.

CONTRACT ASSUMPTION

- The scope of work is a menu of needs and not sequential. As such the selected firm will work with The Desk to create a work plan and priorities based on an annual Marketing/PR budget.
- Respondents are welcome to partner with colleagues/collaborators to respond to the RFP if the requested services are not managed in-house.

PROPOSAL CONTENT

To simplify the evaluation process and maximize comparability, The Desk requests that all responses to this RFP be organized in the manner and format described below.

- A. Executive Summary - Describe your understanding of the work to be performed and your firm's ability to perform the work.
- B. Professional Experience - Describe your firm's experience in providing marketing and PR support to nonprofits, small businesses and/or real estate services firms.
- C. Team Qualifications - Identify leadership and other key staff (as appropriate) who will be assigned to this engagement if you are successful in your bid. Provide their bios specifying relevant experience.
- D. Client Approach - Please describe your approach to onboarding new clients and your team's work style to help ensure projects are delivered with the appropriate client vision.
- E. Fees - Please provide a proposed fee structure assuming the work will vary based on priorities, budget and project.
- F. Client References - Provide, for reference purposes, the names and contact information for three other similar clients.

The content of all proposals will be kept confidential. The Desk has the right to reject all proposals. All costs associated with the respondent's preparation, submission and oral interview shall be the responsibility of the proposer.

SELECTION TIMELINE

September 30, 2024	RFP distribution
October 11, 2024	Proposals due by 5pm CT
October 14-22, 2024	Finalist interviews
October 28, 2024	Firm selected and notified
November 1, 2024	Start of contract

KEY CONTACT

Please direct any questions to the following contact:

Ja'Net Defell
President & CEO
Community Desk Chicago
rfp@communitydeskchicago.org

Please return the complete proposal via email to rfp@communitydeskchicago.org no later than 5pm CT on October 11, 2024.