



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

March 4, 2020

Request for Qualifications# 2020-005

Public Relations Services

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SECTION I – SUMMARY

In carrying out its mission to improve air quality in the San Francisco Bay Area, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) seeks to obtain the services of a public relations (PR) firm to support the Air District in media relations and crisis communications services. Through this Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process, the Air District expects to enter into a professional services contract with a PR firm to provide services to the Air District upon request.

To respond to this RFQ, an interested company should submit its statement of qualifications electronically (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format) to the Air District's Procurement Portal (Portal):

Cynthia Zhang, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>

**Statements of qualifications must be submitted and received by
4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 27, 2020.
Late submissions will not be considered.**

Statements of qualifications must address all information requested in this RFQ. A statement may add information not requested in this RFQ, but the information should be in addition to, not instead of, the requested information and format. Minority business enterprises, women's business enterprises, veteran's business enterprises, and Certified Green Businesses are encouraged to submit statements of qualifications. **Any questions regarding this RFQ should be submitted through the Portal.**

SECTION II – BACKGROUND

A. Air District Overview

The Air District was created by the California Legislature in 1955 as the first regional agency to address air pollution in California. The Air District jurisdiction includes Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Santa Clara, San Francisco, San Mateo, southwestern Solano, and southern Sonoma counties.

The State Legislature originally gave the Air District the authority to regulate stationary sources of air pollution, such as factories, oil refineries, chemical plants, gasoline stations, and agricultural burning. With more recent legislation, the Air District was granted authority to enact certain measures related to transportation and mobile sources.

The Air District is governed by a twenty-four member Board of Directors, consisting of elected officials, including county supervisors, mayors, and city council members. The Executive Officer / Air Pollution Control Officer (APCO) for the Air District is Jack P. Broadbent.

B. Public Relations Services

The goal of this RFQ is to identify qualified firms to assist with as-needed public relations counsel including media pitching, press event support and crisis communications.

Through this RFQ, the Air District seeks to select a public relations firm to provide services upon the Air District's request. The selected public relations firm will work with the Air District's Communications Office. Firms interested in submitting a statement of qualifications to provide such services are required to follow the recommended guidelines and instructions contained in this RFQ.

SECTION III – GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

A. Services Needed

The Air District requires skilled resources for public relations services on an as-needed basis. Services may include but are not limited to:

1. Media Pitching

Maintain lists of key Bay Area media contacts and proactively pitch local, regional and multicultural media outlets to place stories and generate wide press coverage of Air District health alerts, initiatives, events and related topics.

2. Press Events

Assist with the coordination and logistics of press conferences and/or speaking engagements including securing locations, notifying media, producing media kits and making follow-up calls to media after the events.

3. Crisis Communications

Assist the Air District in creating and implementing crisis communications plans to disseminate information and provide support in community awareness during

incident response. The firm must be able to provide “on call” services and be available after business hours and on weekends.

SECTION IV – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A. General

1. Interested firms must create an account through the Portal described on p.1 of this RFQ to view RFQ documents and addenda, and to submit questions and bid documents.
2. All statements of qualifications must be made in accordance with the conditions of this RFQ. Failure to address any of the requirements is grounds for rejection of this submission.
3. All information should be complete, specific, and as concise as possible.
4. Statements of qualifications should include any additional information that the respondent deems pertinent to the understanding and evaluation of the bid.
5. The Air District may modify the RFQ or issue supplementary information or guidelines during the submission preparation period prior to the due date. Please check our [Portal](#) for updates prior to the due date.
6. The Air District reserves the right to reject any and all submissions.
7. All questions must be in written form and submitted through the Portal no later than **4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 13, 2020**. Firms will not be able to submit questions after this time. All questions will be answered in writing and posted on the [Portal](#) by **6:00 p.m. on Friday, March 20, 2020**.
8. The cost for developing the statement of qualifications is the responsibility of the responding firm, and shall not be chargeable to the Air District.
9. A firm’s selection and the execution of a contract with the Air District does not guarantee any particular amount of work.

B. Submittal of Statements of Qualifications

All statements of qualifications must be submitted according to the specifications set forth in Section V (A) – Contents of Statement of Qualifications, and this section. Failure to adhere to these specifications may be cause for the rejection of the submission.

1. Due Date – All statements of qualifications are due no later than **4:00 p.m., Friday, March 27, 2020**, and should be submitted via the Portal to:

Cynthia Zhang, Staff Specialist
Bay Area Air Quality Management District
375 Beale Street, Suite 600; San Francisco, CA 94105
Portal link: <https://baaqmd.bonfirehub.com>

2. Uploading large documents may take significant time, depending on the size of the file(s) and Internet connection speed. Bidders should plan sufficient time before the due date to finalize their submissions and to complete the uploading process. Bidders will not be able to submit documents after the due date and time. Statements of qualifications received after the date and time previously specified will not be considered.
3. Signature – All statements of qualifications should be signed by an authorized representative of the responding firm.
4. Submittal – Submit one (1) electronic copy (in Adobe Acrobat PDF file format). Electronic submissions submitted via the Portal will be acknowledged with a confirmation email receipt. Late proposals will not be accepted. Any correction or re-submission of proposals will not extend the submittal due date.
5. Grounds for Rejection – A statement of qualifications may be rejected at any time if it arrives after the deadline, is not in the prescribed format, or is not signed by an individual authorized to represent the firm.
6. Disposition of the Submissions – All responses to this RFQ become property of the Air District and will be kept confidential until a recommendation for award of a contract has been announced. Thereafter, submittals are subject to public inspection and disclosure under the California Public Records Act. If a respondent believes that any portion of its submittal is exempt from public disclosure, it may mark that portion “confidential.” The Air District will use reasonable means to ensure that such confidential information is safeguarded, but will not be held liable for inadvertent disclosure of the information. Statements of Qualifications marked “confidential” in their entirety will not be honored, and the Air District will not deny public disclosure of any portion of submittals so marked.

By submitting a statement of qualifications with portions marked “confidential,” a respondent represents it has a good faith belief that such portions are exempt from disclosure under the California Public Records Act and agrees to reimburse the Air District for, and to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Air District, its officers, employees, and agents, from and against any and all claims, damages, losses, liabilities, suits, judgments, fines, penalties, costs, and expenses, including without limitation, attorneys’ fees, expenses, and court costs of any nature whatsoever, arising from or relating to the Air District’s non-disclosure of any such designated portions of a statement of qualifications.

C. Interviews

1. The Air District, at its option, may interview firms that respond to this RFQ. The interviews will be for the purpose of clarifying the statement of qualifications.
2. Submittal of new materials at an interview will not be permitted.
3. Interviews may involve a presentation and/or a question-and-answer session.

SECTION V – SUBMISSION CONTENTS

A. Contents of Statement of Qualifications

Submitted statements of qualifications should follow the format outlined below and include all requested information. Please number your responses exactly as the items are presented here, and limit to 10 one-sided pages, except work samples, which should be included in a separate appendix.

1. Experience, Structure, Personnel

- a. Firm Contact Information – Provide the following information about the firm:
 - Address and telephone number of office nearest to San Francisco, California and the address and phone number of the office that each of the proposed staff members are based out of if different.
 - Name of firm’s representative designated as the contact and email address
 - Name of project manager, if different from the individual designated as the contact
- b. Firm History – Provide a history of your firm’s experience in providing public relations services similar to those sought through this RFQ, including any services provided to governmental organizations. Provide references for any similar projects listed, including contact name, title, and telephone number. Describe the technical capabilities of the firm in all areas relevant to the services sought through this RFQ.
- c. Assigned Personnel – List all key personnel who would be assigned to Air District projects by name and role. Provide descriptions of education and training, along with a summary of experience in providing services similar to those sought through this RFQ. Background descriptions can be a resume, CV, or summary sheet. Note that the standard Air District contract will not permit substitution of project manager or staff without prior written approval of the Air District’s assigned program manager.
- d. Work Samples (Does not count against 10-page limit) – Samples of up to 5 major projects that the firm has completed in the areas of public relations sought through this RFQ. Include the client, the name of a contact person who is able to provide a reference, a description of the nature of the work, and the size and complexity of the project.
- e. Subcontractors – List any subcontractors that will be used and the work to be performed by them.
- f. Conflict of Interest – Address possible conflicts of interest or appearance of impropriety regarding other clients of the firm that could be created by providing services to the Air District. Describe procedures to be followed to detect and resolve any conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety. The Air District reserves the right to consider the nature and extent of such

work in evaluating the statement of qualifications.

- g. Additional Information – Provide any other information that the firm wishes the Air District to consider in evaluating the submission.

2. Fee Information (Does not count against 10-page limit)

- a. The normal hourly rate of each principal and staff member whose resume is provided or whose job category may be required, and the rate that would be charged to the Air District.
- b. A list of anticipated reimbursable expenses, such as expenses for presentation materials, supplies, deliveries, B/W and color printouts and copies, faxes, photo scans and travel, copywriting and copyediting services and the rate charged for each.
- c. Any reduced fees offered to other municipalities, governmental entities, economic development or nonprofit organizations, and civic organizations.
- d. Any other fees or charges.

SECTION VI – QUALIFICATIONS EVALUATION

A panel of Air District staff will evaluate all statements of qualifications. The panel will recommend the selection of one or more contractors to the APCO, who will, in turn, make a recommendation to the Air District Board of Directors. The Air District Board of Directors may be required to approve the contract to carry out the work described in this RFQ. An example of a typical contract for professional services used by the Air District is included in Section VII.

In evaluating statements of qualifications submitted pursuant to this request, the Air District places high value on the following factors, not necessarily in order of importance:

- Prior experience of firm and employees in providing public relations support to governmental, public health or environmental agencies.
- Years of professional experience, complexity, and nature of public relations services handled by the firm.
- Quality and diversity of work product applicable to the Air District's messaging needs as demonstrated through submitted work samples.
- Experience of the PR firm with comparable organizations and types of services.
- Demonstrated knowledge of and experience with Bay Area media.
- Selected firm's staff ability, availability and facility for working with Air District directors, officers, staff and consultants.
- Demonstrated knowledge of Air District activities.
- Conformity with applicable Air District policies as noted herein.
- Proposed fee structure relating to services the firm(s) would provide.
- Local business, green business or woman-/minority-owned business.

The Air District reserves the right to reject any and all statements of qualifications submitted and/or request additional information.

SECTION VII – SAMPLE CONTRACT

A sample contract to carry out the work described in this RFQ is available on the Air District's website at <http://www.baaqmd.gov/about-the-air-district/request-for-proposals-rfp-rfq/samples-previous>. (Click the + to the left of Sample Contracts, and then click on the Professional Services Contract link)