



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL  
RFP# RFP-2510**

**For: Tourism Public Relations, Advertising & Media Buying Firm(s)**

The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation (“Corporation”) seeks proposals from qualified firms to provide further development and implementation of the State of Rhode Island’s brand to, among other things, (1) promote tourism and (2) provide general advertising services through public relations efforts, advertising campaigns, social media development and digital services media buying. The firm(s) will also (3) provide strategic media buying, planning and measurement services, to include digital services media buying, evaluate media opportunities; plan media buys; cultivate promotional and strategic partnerships; and provide research and analytics on all marketing efforts. In addition, the firm(s) will provide services including content management; copywriting; management of production and development of creative content that inspires, informs and drives action. The chosen firm(s) will work collaboratively with website, research and analytics partners, among others. The results of these efforts will benefit businesses, as well as in-state Destination Marketing Organizations by increasing tourism revenue and, on a larger scale, increasing the employment base for the State.

This document constitutes a Request for Proposal (“RFP”), in a competitive format, from qualified firms. This request is an offer by the Corporation to underwrite, in accordance with the terms and conditions of this RFP, the services proposed by the successful firm(s), by contract.

The respondents (“Proposers”) to this RFP shall provide a proposal, in accordance with the terms and conditions set forth herein, to provide all or part of services to the Corporation as described in the Scope of Work.

**PROJECT OVERVIEW**

The Corporation seeks a firm(s) able to develop an advertising campaign; grow public relations strategy; expand social media opportunities, including, but not limited to, content management; manage production and development of creative content that inspires, informs and drives action; evaluate media opportunities; plan, execute and analyze media buys; cultivate promotional and strategic partnerships; and provide research and analytics on all marketing efforts. The chosen firm(s) will work collaboratively with website, research and analytics partners, among others.

**BACKGROUND**

Tourism is an important driver of the State’s economy. In 2023, Rhode Island attracted 28.4 million visitors and tourism, which contributed \$5.6 billion to the State’s economy. It also supported 86,612 jobs, representing 12.9% of all jobs in the State, and provided more than \$935 million in state and local tax revenues.

The Corporation is committed to growing the State’s tourism industry through:

- increasing traveler trips to Rhode Island;
- increasing traveler length of stay;
- increasing average traveler spend per trip; and

- increasing resident spend on tourism activities.

The Corporation promotes Rhode Island in domestic and international markets, leveraging multiple marketing and communications tactics, including, but not limited to, traditional public relations strategies, advertising, social media, group sales initiatives and industry engagement. All of these efforts are directed at the State's target audience—prospective visitors, previous visitors, Rhode Island residents, transportation partners, tour operators, travel agents, and industry partners.

## **OVERALL SCOPE OF WORK**

Proposers should outline how they can fulfill a scope of work that includes the following activities: public relations, advertising, digital advertising media buying, and social media services, as set forth below.

### **1. PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The Corporation requires Proposers to provide public and media relations initiatives, including, but not limited to, strategic planning, partnership opportunities, activating media events and programs, content creation and distribution, and to assist other functions of the Corporation as needed. Proposers should have demonstrated relationships with national and regional print and broadcast media.

#### **Public Relations Core Services**

At a minimum, the Proposer(s) should be able to perform the following services under the strategic direction of the Corporation's staff:

**Strategic Planning:** Support the development and writing of the Corporation's communications plan; conduct research for, and provide input to, a multi-year public and media relations plan; establish program key performance indicators and measures; execute required items from the plan as requested; and provide required reporting to the Corporation on performance of the plan.

**Public & Media Relations:** Provide ongoing media relations support, representing Rhode Island's unique story and targeted media opportunities; align partner priorities to provide direct referrals to regional marketing organizations; maintain strong relationships with a diversity of U.S. media across multiple channels in the tourism, lifestyle and other relevant sectors; review and analyze incoming U.S. media queries for information; proactively pitch based on the Corporation's strategic plan; provide recommendations to the Corporation and follow up with journalists as required; organize and execute media events and familiarization (fam) tours; arrange and manage media appointments for community representatives in key domestic markets; and secure journalists to visit Rhode Island either individually or in groups.

**Content Creation and Distribution:** Create and share relevant media materials and messaging; monitor the content being created as a result of the efforts by the Corporation and firm(s). This includes, but is not limited to: creating press releases, backgrounders, story idea pitches and other press materials, key messages, speeches, etc.; identifying appropriate distribution channels (e.g. newswire agencies, trade shows, media distribution lists and networks, etc.); and managing the distribution of content across these channels. Copywriting is to be included in this and all services within the Scope.

**Partnership Cultivation:** Identify potential projects where the Corporation would be able to work with appropriate media and brands; identify trade shows and consumer events worthy of consideration for the Corporation; and promote and represent the state at relevant events.

## **2. ADVERTISING**

For each of the following project areas, the Proposer should prove its capability by describing strategies to be used and quality controls. Sufficient detail must be given and must include examples of past projects, ability to meet deadlines, and managerial experience. The Proposer should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of brand in a global marketplace, and the shifting dynamics of how consumers receive and use information today.

**Strategic Planning:** Provide the Corporation with an “insider’s look” at the Proposer’s strategic account planning process. For instance, what goes into the development of a plan? What type of research does the Proposer perform?

**Advertising Campaign Development:** Demonstrate how the Proposer develops a holistic approach to client brand advertising, integrating interactive, including social media, into the overall strategy, along with emerging trends including marketing technology. Include how the Proposer’s media planning has changed due to barriers affecting traditional frequency and reach via television, including streaming services, video on demand, recording devices, etc. For instance, how does the Proposer approach and extend beyond that 30-second spot? How has the Proposer’s strategy evolved based on the way consumers are receiving and using their information today?

**Production/Creative:** Does the Proposer do production in-house? If not, how does the Proposer manage production? Is the Proposer’s creative team located in the office that this account will be managed? The Proposer should demonstrate current and/or past client examples of how its brand development moves across all mediums.

**Media Planning & Buying:** The Proposer should outline its process in deciding where, when, and how to purchase media, what tools or analytics it uses, the determining elements that make the Proposer’s purchasing decisions, optimization strategy, and co-op Strategy. The Proposer should provide an overview of its philosophy as it relates to planning and buying media domestically.

**Promotional and Strategic Partnerships:** The Proposer should identify where its strategic partnerships or alliances fit into its overall approach and how it has used strategic partnerships to extend a client’s budget and exposure.

## **3. DIGITAL ADVERTISING MEDIA BUYING**

The goal of the Corporation’s digital advertising is to generate cost-effective, quality inquiries to increase the quantity of overnight visits to Rhode Island. The Corporation seeks a strong partner with significant and proven experience purchasing digital advertising media for large organizations, while utilizing a data-driven approach for timely purchasing and effective optimization of performance.

### **Core Services**

The Proposer will work with the Corporation's marketing department to achieve agreed-upon goals for growth and must have a successful record of achieving growth through a proactive, analytical, and innovative media buying approach. The Corporation is seeking a strategic partner with a proven, results-oriented background in acquisition marketing. In addition to digital media buying, including digital billboards and outdoor advertising, there will be some traditional media, including radio and television commercial placement.

### **Strategy and Approach**

Proposers should explain how it will approach and provide the requested services and capabilities below and detail how it plans to approach digital advertising media buying for the Corporation to fuel growth in a crowded market. Proposers should highlight use of cutting-edge technology and how it will leverage data as a competitive and strategic advantage. To accomplish this, Proposers should demonstrate the following services:

**Paid Search:** Regular campaign management and optimization via bid management tools; campaign, ad group, and keyword creation; ad copy development; ongoing testing and optimization; set-up and maintenance of audience lists; and landing page recommendations.

**Display (Prospecting, Retargeting, Native and Online Video/Audio):** Media planning and buying, utilizing relevant advertising networks and sites; ongoing optimization of campaigns, including pixel mapping; and cohesive messaging recommendations and implementation.

**Mobile:** Identify standout media opportunities and maximize conversions through best practices and trends.

**Paid Social:** Leverage social media sites for acquisition purposes; actively manage, optimize and test campaigns; and create variety of messaging and recommended imagery. Work with social media team to maximize paid social efforts and implement effective media placements based on strategy.

**Explore Additional Opportunities:** including advanced/digital TV, marketing technologies and other digital opportunities as they arise.

### **Vendor Capabilities & Reporting Structure**

Understand the Corporation's business strategy and negotiate and execute on agreed upon media plans; drive quality inquiries, while maintaining the integrity of the brand; provide comprehensive recommendations for each media tactic based on meeting the agreed-upon goals; produce weekly reporting and comprehensive analysis on performance and optimization efforts; and communicate and apply the most relevant and competitive trends and performance measures.

## **4. SOCIAL MEDIA SERVICES**

The goal of the Corporation's social media presence is to showcase the State in an aspirational way, capturing the attention of followers with captivating imagery highlighting the diverse offerings in the State, while engaging consumers and driving them to VisitRhodeIsland.com for trip planning resources.

### **Core Services**

Proposers should demonstrate how they plan to integrate social media into a brand strategy, complementing ongoing advertising and public relations strategies and tactics to further strengthen the Corporation's brand.

### **Strategy & Approach**

Proposer should demonstrate how they integrate social media into a brand strategy and how they would approach a global social strategy; work in collaboration with the Corporation to develop content, provide an overarching social strategy, paid social media plan, and guidance on implementation; and develop recommendations for how a brand should resource to efficiently manage a global social footprint.

**Content Creation:** Build a strategic content calendar tying in current messaging from advertising creative, aiming to showcase content that is inspirational and offers a look at the variety of accommodations, restaurants, activities and events throughout the state and during all four seasons. Utilize a mix of user-generated content along with organic content to diversify the content for a variety of digital audiences and targeted geographies.

**Channel Monitoring and Growth:** Recommend strategies, to include monthly contesting, to increase data acquisition opportunities and growth. Monitor trends and identify opportunities on new channels or current features not yet explored. Ongoing timely community management to reply to comments and direct messages as well as travel inquiries and complaints, including an escalation plan where appropriate.

**External Partnerships:** Secure and work with content creators and influencers to increase channel growth and engage new audiences while generating timely content.

## **5. PAID MEDIA EXECUTION**

Contractor shall research and determine appropriate media outlets for the Corporation and solicit requests for proposals from appropriate vendors to assist the Corporation in accessing and marketing in such media outlets. The Contractor shall assist the Corporation in compiling and analyzing the proposals submitted. The Contractor shall negotiate and continually manage buys and added value along with providing the Corporation with front end analytics provided by any solicited vendor. In addition to digital media buying, including digital billboards and outdoor advertising, there will be some traditional media, including radio and television commercial placement.

## **6. RESEARCH AND DEVELOP MEDIA STRATEGIES, ANALYTICS AND SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING**

Contractor shall conduct research necessary to understand the Corporation's target audience and the Corporation's media consumptions, which shall include, but is not limited to, an assessment of the Corporation's competitive environment, a determination of geographic priorities, and an evaluation of opportunities to create a marketing strategy.

The Contractor shall prepare and deliver to the Corporation a measurement plan, which will compile research data and have the capability to provide monthly back-end analytics and recommendations for the Corporation's marketing efforts.

The Contractor will procure paid search and search engine marketing, including regular campaign management and optimization via bid management tools; campaign, ad group, and

keyword creation; ad copy development; ongoing testing and optimization; set-up and maintenance of audience lists; and landing page recommendations.

### **7: CREATIVE SERVICES**

Contractor shall provide a range of creative services, to be outlined in consultation with and subject to the approval of the Corporation for creative assets which may be required to be created and published in support of any paid media plan.

### **8: GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE TO THE CORPORATION'S STAFF**

As part of the services provided, Contractor shall assist the Corporation with any general and administrative services necessary to carry out the objectives of the Corporation's media purchasing efforts, including, but not limited to, participating in weekly status meetings, or any other meetings as needed; preparing client billing; and reviewing, approving, and paying vendor invoices on behalf of the Corporation.

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

The Proposer should be an experienced and qualified full service public relations, advertising and/or media buying firm able to support our global communications and programs. The Proposer's account manager and team must have at least ten years' experience working with domestic travel media and securing measurable results. The ideal Proposer should be: known for their strong reputation for excellent public relations and advertising work; familiar with Rhode Island's tourism brand, partners and industry; established with national travel and lifestyle media; on top of the latest trends and best practices in advertising, public relations, digital media and content marketing; flexible, organized, customer-service oriented and a team player; and exceptional writers with strong communication skills.

### **REFERENCES**

Provide a minimum of three (3) client references including contact name and title, company name, scope of services, contact information, details about their specific role with your agency, and any noteworthy successes achieved. Where possible, please include references similar to the Corporation in scope and size as a state tourism entity.

### **PROJECT TIMELINE**

The successful Proposer(s) will enter into a 12-month contract for services with the Corporation. The duration of the initial contract between the Corporation and the successful Proposer(s) is expected to begin at the start of the new fiscal year on July 1, 2025 and terminate on June 30, 2026. The Corporation reserves the right to renew its agreement, at its sole discretion, prior to the end of each contract term for a total of three (3) years, providing funding to do so is appropriated for this purpose in subsequent budgets. There will be annual reviews in each year the contract is renewed. Proposed renewals are also assessed according to program direction, funding, and consistency of price and scope of work continuity.

### **BUDGET**

Proposer should include comprehensive pricing and/or rate sheet for all potential services that it might provide under this RFP should it be selected as a provider.

The budget should include account management fees, out-of-pocket expenses, and placement (print, broadcast, digital and social) fees. Travel to and from the Corporation offices, and the costs associated with it, will be the responsibility of the Proposer and may be held virtually where appropriate. However, the Corporation reserves the right to adjust both the budget and related services.

Proposers shall provide a proposed fee structure for providing services necessary to complete the proposed scope items. Proposers shall include a total, maximum price to accomplish the scope items incorporated in the proposal. Fee structure proposals shall include, but are not limited to, costs for specific task items from the Scope of Work along with an estimate regarding the duration and number of hours to complete each task. Additionally, Proposers shall provide a personnel schedule which includes job title, years at agency and billing rate for any work which may be undertaken under this contract. Proposers shall also provide job titles and rates for any subcontractors that the respondent is including in this response. If the Proposer contemplates any purchases or pass-through charges during the engagement, any mark-up rate above actual cost shall be identified as a separate line item in the budget. The Corporation reserves the right to adjust both the budget and related services.

In addition to showing how a Proposer will meet the requirements outlined in the Scope of Work, it should also provide information regarding the following:

**Research & Analytics:** Provide an overview of how the Proposer determine success, including, but not limited to, analytic tools or services that it uses, and what type of information it will be reporting back to the Corporation as it relates to meeting the Corporation's objectives. Proposers should define how their analytics can be converted into insights, and how the insights will help guide the Corporation in making decisions on how it markets in the future.

**Travel and Administration:** The Proposer should estimate travel to the Corporation meetings, monthly meetings (can be done virtually), communication and postage/shipping expenses expected to be incurred during contract period, and any additional reserve funds to be held for marketing contingencies. Travel and per diem expenses shall not exceed rates authorized by the Corporation's Travel and Expense Policy.

## **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION**

Designated Corporation staff will evaluate the written proposals. The Corporation may at any time during the evaluation process seek clarification from Proposers regarding any information contained within their proposal. Final scores for each Proposer will reflect a consensus of the staff evaluations.

Any attempt by a Proposer to contact a member of Corporation staff, in an attempt to gain knowledge or an advantage in the evaluation process, may result in disqualification of Proposer. The Corporation anticipates that the top three to five proposals will be asked to provide oral presentations, at their own expense, at the Corporation's office in Providence, Rhode Island. After the oral presentations, there will be a question-and-answer period.

In addition to Proposer management, key personnel performing day-to-day activities will be requested to attend the interview.

Responsive proposals for this RFP will be evaluated according to the Evaluation Criteria outlined below.

**EVALUATION CRITERIA**

	<b>Points</b>
<p><b>OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF COMPANY &amp; DEMONSTRATED RESULTS</b>            Our evaluation will include an assessment of the history of your company, your experience as it relates to the requirements within this RFP, evidence of past performance, quality and relevance of past work, references, and related items.</p>	25
<p><b>CREATIVITY</b>            Our evaluation will include an assessment of the quality of proposed strategies, and creativity. This RFP does not request any new or proposed advertising creative specific to this project.</p>	10
<p><b>QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONNEL</b>            Our evaluation will include an assessment of the qualifications and experience of your managerial team, staff, subcontractors, and related items.</p>	10
<p><b>FAMILIARITY WITH RHODE ISLAND AND THE STATE’S TOURISM INDUSTRY</b>            Our evaluation will include our assessment of your understanding of our organization, the state tourism industry and how you integrated this knowledge into your proposal.</p>	15
<p><b>STRATEGIC THINKING/PLANNING APPROACH</b>            Overall approach and strategy described/outlined in the proposal and firm capacity to perform the engagement within the specified timeframe (prior experience of the firm in meeting timelines will be factored in here).</p>	15
<p><b>BUDGET APPROACH/COST EFFECTIVENESS</b>            Effective and efficient delivery of quality services is demonstrated in relation to the budget allocation. The allocation is reasonable and appropriate. Approach to compensation structure is balanced and structured to maximize marketing investment.</p>	25
Total	100
MBE/WBE/DisBE Participation (additional potential points)	6 pts

***NOTE:** Designated Corporation staff or selected advisors will evaluate the written proposals. The Corporation may at any time during the evaluation process seek clarification from Proposers regarding any information contained within their proposal. Final scores for each respondent will reflect a consensus of the evaluations. Any attempt by a Proposer to contact a member of Corporation staff or selected advisors outside the RFP process, in an attempt to gain knowledge or an advantage, may result in disqualification of Proposer.*



1. ISBE Participation Evaluation (see below for scoring)

- a. The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation encourages MBE/WBE/DisBE participation in this Request. In accordance with Title 37, Chapter 14.1, and Title 37, Chapter 2.2 of the Rhode Island General laws, the Corporation reserves the right to apply additional consideration to MBE/WBE/DisBE up to six (6) additional points in the scoring evaluation as provided below:
- b. Calculation of ISBE Participation Rate
  - i. ISBE Participation Rate for Non-ISBE Vendors. The ISBE participation rate for nonISBE vendors shall be expressed as a percentage and shall be calculated by dividing the amount of non-ISBE vendor's total contract price that will be subcontracted to ISBEs by the non-ISBE vendor's total contract price. For example, if the non-ISBE's total contract price is \$100,000.00 and it subcontracts a total of \$12,000.00 to ISBEs, the non-ISBE's ISBE participation rate would be 12%.
  - ii. ISBE Participation Rate for ISBE Vendors. The ISBE participation rate for ISBE vendors shall be expressed as a percentage and shall be calculated by dividing the amount of the ISBE vendor's total contract price that will be subcontracted to ISBEs and the amount that will be self-performed by the ISBE vendor by the ISBE vendor's total contract price. For example, if the ISBE vendor's total contract price is \$100,000.00 and it subcontracts a total of \$12,000.00 to ISBEs and will perform a total of \$8,000.00 of the work itself, the ISBE vendor's ISBE participation rate would be 20%.
- c. Points for ISBE Participation Rate:
  - i. The vendor with the highest ISBE participation rate shall receive the maximum ISBE participation points. All other vendors shall receive ISBE participation points by applying the following formula:

(Vendor's ISBE participation rate ÷ Highest ISBE participation rate X Maximum ISBE participation points)

For example, assuming the weight given by the RFP to ISBE participation is 6 points, if Vendor A has the highest ISBE participation rate at 20% and Vendor B's ISBE participation rate is 12%, Vendor A will receive the maximum 6 points and Vendor B will receive  $(12\% \div 20\%) \times 6$  which equals 3.6 points.

See Appendix A for information and the MBE, WBE, and/or Disability Business Enterprise Participation Plan form(s). Bidders are required to complete, sign and submit these forms with their overall proposal in a sealed envelope. Please complete separate forms for each MBE, WBE and/or Disability Business Enterprise subcontractor/supplier to be utilized on the solicitation

## **Instructions and Notifications to Proposers**

1. Potential proposers are advised to review all sections of this RFP carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals that depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this RFP will be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content, shall be borne by the proposer. The Corporation assumes no responsibility for such costs.
4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than 120 days following the date set for submission of proposals.
5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
6. Proposals that are submitted late, misdirected or sent to the wrong email address will not be accepted.
7. All proposals should identify the proposed team of professionals, including those employed by subcontractors, if any, along with respective areas of expertise and relevant credentials. Proposer should also provide a delineation of the portion of the scope of work for which each of these professionals will be responsible.
8. All proposals should include the proposer's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W9, downloadable from <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>
9. All proposals should include a completed RFP Response Certification Cover Form, included in this document and available here:  
[https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/rhodeisland/RFP\\_RESPO\\_NSE\\_CERTIFICATION\\_COVER\\_FORM\\_88d2b6a2-2798-4d0f-81b8-cedbe5692088.pdf](https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/rhodeisland/RFP_RESPO_NSE_CERTIFICATION_COVER_FORM_88d2b6a2-2798-4d0f-81b8-cedbe5692088.pdf)
10. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds and made at the discretion of the Corporation.
11. Awarding this RFP is based on the Evaluation Criteria set forth in this RFP. Vendors are advised, however, that all materials and ideas submitted as part of this proposal and during the performance of any award shall be the property of and owned by the Corporation, which may use any such materials and ideas.
12. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Corporation's website ([www.commerceri.com](http://www.commerceri.com)) on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP. Addenda will also be posted to the Rhode Island State Division of Purchases' website at [www.ridop.ri.gov](http://www.ridop.ri.gov).

13. Equal Employment Opportunity (R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28- 5.1-1 Declaration of policy – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation.

14. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no corporation organized under the laws of another state or country shall have the right to transact business in Rhode Island until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). This is a requirement only of the successful bidder.

15. The proposer should be aware of the State’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State’s goal of fifteen percent (15%) participation by MBE’s in all procurements, including a minimum of 7.5% participation by minority business enterprises owned and controlled by a minority owner, as defined in Section 37-14.1-3, and a minimum of 7.5% participation by minority business enterprises owned and controlled by a woman. For further information, visit the website [www.mbe.ri.gov](http://www.mbe.ri.gov).

16. The Corporation reserves the right to award to one or more Proposers.

### **Proposal Requirements**

In order to be considered responsive, proposals must at a minimum contain the following:

#### Technical Proposal Elements

1. Description of the proposed approach and work plan. Activities and timelines should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time oriented. Include a timeline of major tasks and milestones.
2. Person who will be the primary point of contact with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation.
3. Qualifications of the Proposer to provide the requested services including capability, capacity, similarly complex projects and related experience and client references. Certification of availability of individuals in proposal.
4. A listing of the staff to be assigned to this engagement and their respective qualifications, past experience with engagements of this scope including resumes, and their role in those past engagements.
5. A description of the outcome monitoring and evaluation plan including a list of tools to track process, output and outcome measures for each component of the application.

## **Proposal Submission**

Responses to this RFP must be received as follows:

One (1) electronic (PDF) version must be provided by email to [RFP@commerceri.com](mailto:RFP@commerceri.com) by **11:59 pm on Friday, April 25, 2025**. Submissions that are late, misdirected or sent to the wrong email address will not be accepted.

**Note: To ensure transparency, no phone calls pertaining to this RFP will be accepted**

Questions, interpretations, or clarifications concerning this RFP should be directed by e-mail to [RFP@commerceri.com](mailto:RFP@commerceri.com) no later than 11:59 pm on Wednesday, April 16, 2025. Responses to questions, interpretations, or clarifications concerning this RFP will be posted online via addendum at [www.commerceri.com](http://www.commerceri.com) and [www.ridop.ri.gov](http://www.ridop.ri.gov) on April 18, 2025, to ensure equal awareness of important facts and details.

*The Rhode Island Commerce Corporation reserves the right to terminate this solicitation prior to entering into any agreement with any qualified firm pursuant to this Request for Proposal, and by responding hereto, no firms are vested with any rights in any way whatsoever.*

*Rhode Island Commerce Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for not complying with the terms of this RFP.*

## APPENDIX A

### **PROPOSER ISBE RESPONSIBILITIES AND MBE, WBE, AND/OR DISABILITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIPATION FORM**

#### **A. Proposer's ISBE Responsibilities (from 150-RICR-90-10-1.7.E)**

1. Proposal of ISBE Participation Rate. Unless otherwise indicated in the RFP, a Proposer must submit its proposed ISBE Participation Rate in a sealed envelope or via sealed electronic submission at the time it submits its proposed total contract price. The Proposer shall be responsible for completing and submitting all standard forms adopted pursuant to 105-RICR-90-10-1.9 and submitting all substantiating documentation as reasonably requested by either the Using Agency's MBE/WBE Coordinator, Division, ODEO, or Governor's Commission on Disabilities including but not limited to the names and contact information of all proposed subcontractors and the dollar amounts that correspond with each proposed subcontract.
2. Failure to Submit ISBE Participation Rate. Any Proposer that fails to submit a proposed ISBE Participation Rate or any requested substantiating documentation in a timely manner shall receive zero (0) ISBE participation points.
3. Execution of Proposed ISBE Participation Rate. Proposers shall be evaluated and scored based on the amounts and rates submitted in their proposals. If awarded the contract, Proposers shall be required to achieve their proposed ISBE Participation Rates. During the life of the contract, the Proposer shall be responsible for submitting all substantiating documentation as reasonably requested by the Using Agency's MBE/WBE Coordinator, Division, ODEO, or Governor's Commission on Disabilities including but not limited to copies of purchase orders, subcontracts, and cancelled checks.
4. Change Orders. If during the life of the contract, a change order is issued by the Division, the Proposer shall notify the ODEO of the change as soon as reasonably possible. Proposers are required to achieve their proposed ISBE Participation Rates on any change order amounts.
5. Notice of Change to Proposed ISBE Participation Rate. If during the life of the contract, the Proposer becomes aware that it will be unable to achieve its proposed ISBE Participation Rate, it must notify the Division and ODEO as soon as reasonably possible. The Division, in consultation with ODEO and Governor's Commission on Disabilities, and the Proposer may agree to a modified ISBE Participation Rate provided that the change in circumstances was beyond the control of the Proposer or the direct result of an unanticipated reduction in the overall total project cost.

#### **B. MBE, WBE, AND/OR Disability Business Enterprise Participation Plan Form:**

Attached is the MBE, WBE, and/or Disability Business Enterprise Participation Plan form. Bidders are required to complete, sign and submit with their overall proposal in a sealed envelope. Please complete separate forms for each MBE, WBE and/or Disability Business Enterprise subcontractor/supplier to be utilized on the solicitation.

**MBE, WBE, and/or DISABILITY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Bidder's Name:

Bidder's Address:

Point of Contact:

Telephone:

Email:

Solicitation No.:

Project Name:

This form is intended to capture commitments between the prime contractor/vendor and MBE/WBE and/or Disability Business Enterprise subcontractors and suppliers, including a description of the work to be performed and the percentage of the work as submitted to the prime contractor/vendor. Please note that all MBE/WBE subcontractors/suppliers must be certified by the Office of Diversity, Equity and Opportunity MBE Compliance Office and all Disability Business Enterprises must be certified by the Governor's Commission on Disabilities at time of bid, and that MBE/WBE and Disability Business Enterprise subcontractors must self-perform 100% of the work or subcontract to another RI certified MBE in order to receive participation credit. Vendors may count 60% of expenditures for materials and supplies obtained from an MBE certified as a regular dealer/supplier, and 100% of such expenditures obtained from an MBE certified as a manufacturer. This form must be completed in its entirety and submitted at time of bid. **Please complete separate forms for each MBE/WBE or Disability Business Enterprise subcontractor/supplier to be utilized on the solicitation.**

Name of Subcontractor/Supplier:					
Type of RI Certification:		<input type="checkbox"/> MBE <input type="checkbox"/> WBE <input type="checkbox"/> Disability Business Enterprise			
Address:					
Point of Contact:					
Telephone:					
Email:					
Detailed Description of Work To Be Performed by Subcontractor or Materials to be Supplied by Supplier:					
Total Contract Value (\$):		Subcontract Value (\$):		ISBE Participation Rate (%):	
Anticipated Date of Performance:					

I certify under penalty of perjury that the forgoing statements are true and correct.

<b>Prime Contractor/Vendor Signature</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Subcontractor/Supplier Signature</b>		<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>

## RFP/RFQ RESPONSE CERTIFICATION COVER FORM

**Instruction: To fulfill your RFP/RFQ response, this form must be completed, printed, signed and included with your submission.**

### SECTION 1 - RESPONDENT INFORMATION

**RFP/RFQ Number:**

**RFP/RFQ Title:**

**RFP/RFQ Respondent Name:**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Fax:**

**Contact Name:**

**Contact Title:**

**Contact Email:**

### SECTION 2 —DISCLOSURES

**RFP/RFQ Respondents must respond to every statement. RFP/RFQ Responses submitted without a complete response may be deemed nonresponsive.**

*Indicate "Y" (Yes) or "N" (No) for Disclosures 1-4, and if "Yes," provide details below*

\_\_\_\_ 1. State whether the Respondent, or any officer, director, manager, stockholder, member, partner, or other owner or principal of the Respondent or any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate has been subject to suspension or debarment by any federal, state, or municipal governmental authority, or the subject of criminal prosecution, or convicted of a criminal offense within the previous 5 years. If "Yes," provide details below.

\_\_\_\_ 2. State whether the Respondent, or any officer, director, manager, stockholder, member, partner, or other owner or principal of the Respondent or any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate has had any contracts with a federal, state, or municipal governmental authority terminated for any reason within the previous 5 years. If "Yes," provide details below.

\_\_\_\_ 3. State whether the Respondent, or any officer, director, manager, stockholder, member, partner, or other owner or principal of the Respondent or any parent, subsidiary, or affiliate has been fined more than \$5000 for violation(s) of any Rhode Island environmental law(s) by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management within the previous 5 years. If "Yes," provide details below.

\_\_\_\_ 4. State whether any officer, director, manager, stockholder, member, partner, or other owner or principal of the Respondent is serving or has served within the past two calendar years as either an appointed or elected official of any state governmental authority or quasi-public corporation, including without limitation, any entity created as a legislative body or public or state agency by the general assembly or constitution of this state.

*Disclosure details (continue on additional sheets if necessary):*

## SECTION 3 —OWNERSHIP DISCLOSURE

**Respondents must provide all relevant information. Respondent proposals submitted without a complete response may be deemed nonresponsive.**

If the Respondent is publicly held, the Respondent may provide owner information about only those stockholders, members, partners, or other owners that hold at least 10% of the record or beneficial equity interests of the Respondent; otherwise, complete ownership disclosure is required.

List each officer, director, manager, stockholder, member, partner, or other owner or principle of the Respondent, and each intermediate parent company and the ultimate parent company of the Respondent. For each individual, provide his or her name, business address, principal occupation, position with the Respondent, and the percentage of ownership, if any, he or she holds in the Respondent, and each intermediate parent company and the ultimate parent company of the Respondent.

## SECTION 4 —CERTIFICATIONS

**Respondents must respond to every statement. Responses submitted without a complete response may be deemed nonresponsive.**

*Indicate "Y" (Yes) or "N" (No), and if "No," provide details below.*

### THE RESPONDENT CERTIFIES THAT:

\_\_\_ 1. The Respondent will immediately disclose, in writing, to the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation any potential conflict of interest which may occur during the term of any contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation.

\_\_\_ 2. The Respondent possesses all licenses and anyone who will perform any work will possess all licenses required by applicable federal, state, and local law necessary to perform the requirements of any contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation and will maintain all required licenses during the term of any contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation. In the event that any required license shall lapse or be restricted or suspended, the Respondent shall immediately notify the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation in writing.

\_\_\_ 3. The Respondent will maintain all required insurance during the term of any contract pursuant to this solicitation. In the event that any required insurance shall lapse or be canceled, the Respondent will immediately notify the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation in writing.

\_\_\_ 4. The Respondent understands that falsification of any information in its RFP/RFQ response or failure to notify the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation of any changes in any disclosures or certifications in this Respondent Certification may be grounds for suspension, debarment, and/or prosecution for fraud.

\_\_\_ 5. The Respondent has not paid and will not pay any bonus, commission, fee, gratuity, or other remuneration to any employee or official of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation or the State of Rhode Island or any subdivision of the State of Rhode Island or other governmental authority for the purpose of obtaining an award of a contract pursuant to this solicitation. The Respondent further certifies that no bonus, commission, fee, gratuity, or other remuneration has been or will be received from any third party or paid to any third party contingent on the award of a contract pursuant to this solicitation.

\_\_\_ 6. This RFP/RFQ response is not a collusive RFP/RFQ response. Neither the Respondent, nor any of its owners, stockholders, members, partners, principals, directors, managers, officers, employees, or agents has in any way colluded, conspired, or agreed, directly or indirectly, with any other Respondent or person to submit a collusive response to the solicitation or to refrain from submitting response to the solicitation, or has in any manner, directly or indirectly, sought by agreement or collusion or other communication with any other Respondent or person to fix the price or prices in the response or the response of any other Respondent, or to fix any overhead, profit, or cost component of the price in the response or the response of any other Respondent, or to secure through any collusion, conspiracy, or unlawful agreement any advantage against the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation or the State of Rhode Island or any person with an interest in the contract awarded pursuant to this solicitation. The price in the response is fair and proper and is not tainted by any collusion, conspiracy, or unlawful agreement on the part of the Respondent, its owners, stockholders, members, partners, principals, directors, managers, officers, employees, or agents.

\_\_\_ 7. The Respondent: (i) is not identified on the General Treasurer's list created pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws § 37-2.5-3 as a person or entity engaging in investment activities in Iran described in § 37-2.5-2(b); and (ii) is not engaging in any such investment activities in Iran.



\_\_\_ 8. The Respondent will comply with all of the laws that are incorporated into and/or applicable to any contract with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation.

*Certification details (continue on additional sheet if necessary):*

**Submission by the Respondent of a response pursuant to this solicitation constitutes an offer to contract with the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation on the terms and conditions contained in this solicitation and the response. The Respondent certifies that: (1) the Respondent has reviewed this solicitation and agrees to comply with its terms and conditions; (2) the response is based on this solicitation; and (3) the information submitted in the response (including this Respondent Certification Cover Form) is accurate and complete. The Respondent acknowledges that the terms and conditions of this solicitation and the response will be incorporated into any contract awarded to the Respondent pursuant to this solicitation and the response. The person signing below represents, under penalty of perjury, that he or she is fully informed regarding the preparation and contents of this response and has been duly authorized to execute and submit this response on behalf of the Respondent.**

**RESPONDENT**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Respondent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature in ink

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name and title of person signing on behalf of Respondent