

Request for Qualifications for Community Communications Services

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

LISC’s mission statement: “Together with residents and partners, LISC forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity --great places to live, work, visit, do business and raise families”. Working from an explicit racial justice lens and in partnership with our community-based stakeholders, LISC aims to strengthen hyper-local ecosystems to create an economic recovery agenda that addresses near-and long-term income growth, affordable housing, job opportunities, healthy communities and improved outcomes for low-income families. LISC bridges the gap between the most distressed neighborhoods and hard-to-reach capital and resources. By providing customized technical assistance, community capacity resiliency efforts to not only access critical financial capital, but also access important intellectual and technical capital, LISC works to build the collective pathway necessary for communities of color to survive and thrive.

SUMMARY

Greater Newark LISC (GNL) issues this Request for Qualifications to engage communications expertise to work with the GNL team and related stakeholders to form and employ a program-related communication outreach and communications strategy associated with our **Thriving Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI)**, a systems-change model, currently piloted in two Newark, NJ neighborhoods (Fairmount Heights and Clinton Hill). The initial Theory of Action is provided here:

**Thriving Neighborhoods Initiative (TNI):
A Multi-Year Community Building Model**



Guiding Principle: Catalyzing opportunities that engage and activate residents power in collaborative decision-making process to influence equitable neighborhood outcomes.

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With intentions to develop creative measures, initiate and incentivize community voices and inclusive storytelling, the **Community Communications Consultant** will advance new and existing TNI platforms to leverage hyperlocal systems-change solutions.

SCOPE OF WORK

GNL will work with the selected Consultant to specifically define the scope of services along with a mutually agreed-upon term. That said, initial parameters associated with the work can be best outlined as follows:

Scope of Services	Prospective Deliverables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage GNL’s Community Capacity Building ecosystem to optimize information-sharing and communication channels that capture neighborhood impact stories and TNI partner profiles. More specifically, the Consultant will advise the GNL team on how to comprehend and relay methods of ethical storytelling and improve community reporting processes that address information equity gaps most efficiently; Assess current news and the information sharing landscape of the Greater Newark region. Initiate and/or coordinate key outreach with City, regional, and state-wide news outlets, on behalf of GNL, stakeholders, and resident-leaders to develop and rollout a TNI communications pipeline; and Assess current success stories & impact strategies with the goal of providing direct training and active coaching to the LISC Communications team on how to create information-sharing mechanisms that are rooted in knowledge, trust-building, and collective power of community in response to particular community challenges in TNI’s target neighborhoods. 	<p>Tier 1: Primary deliverables are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curate a communications project portfolio to accelerate information sharing within the TNI pilot neighborhoods and inform new opportunities to uplift residents' voices, lived experiences, and hyperlocal systems-change solutions; Train and actively coach the Greater Newark LISC Communications team on how to deliver the most collaborative and efficient information-sharing mechanisms to enhance the visibility for new and existing TNI neighborhood projects and partner solutions; and Spearhead the publishing of a multimedia series of TNI project impact stories and/or resident-leader profiles and ensure wide dissemination of final products (i.e. published news stories, social and audio media, partner websites and newsletters, podcasts, etc.) <p>Tier 2: Secondary Services (scope strictly on an as needed basis):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spearhead a cross-sector partner community premiere, screening and/or product rollout for diverse, cross-neighborhood audiences, with the purpose of highlighting neighborhood communications solutions that address information equity gaps (i.e. issue-based themes re: housing, arts and culture preservation, food security, creative placemaking, and/or land use)
<p><i>NOTE: As stated above, GNL will work with the Consultant to specifically establish the scope of work (SOW), timeline and full budget. GNL will exercise reasonable flexibility and mutuality with the Consultant to determine the final SOW and budget, however, has full discretion in establishing the final parameters.</i></p>	

Consultant services should support TNI-specific target audiences, which include:

- Resident leaders – key individual resident leaders engaged with TNI and other related GNL Community Capacity-Building programs;
- Key nonprofit community-based organizations and coalition-building stakeholders engaged in TNI; and
- Greater Newark LISC staff and TNI resource partners, (i.e., GNL, Victoria Foundation and Rutgers University-Newark’s Cornwall Center for Metropolitan Studies)

ANTICIPATED PROJECT TIMELINE

Consultants should plan to complete the requested services over the duration of 12 months, with potential prospects for an extended subsequent engagement period. Key engagement and corresponding timeline consisting of a required primary tier of services, and a secondary tier on an as-needed basis, will be mutually determined with the selected Consultant.

PROPOSAL SELECTION CRITERIA

GNL will evaluate RFQ submissions based primarily on relevant experience achieving equitable outcomes for similar organizations, knowledge of inclusive community development and neighborhood revitalization practices, and familiarity with LISC’s local Capacity

Building goals and enabling environment. GNL will also consider the costs reasonableness in how the Consultant typically bills for services.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Qualified consultants should submit an RFQ of no more than ten (10) pages that addresses the following factors:

- **Resumes of Personnel** – Provide resumes of each consultant who will work on the project, and their respective responsibilities for this project. Include a summary of relevant experiences of the consulting firm overall plus each of the consultants in working on similar projects with similar agencies. Explicitly identify the lead consultant on the project.
- **Communications Portfolio** – Provide a portfolio for each consultant with published communications and executed programs, local to or having worked in an area similar to the Greater Newark area preferred, that highlights outreach and journalistic skills that match the criteria (i.e. website, social media accounts, photos, videos, podcasts, etc.)
- **Previous Clients/References** – Provide a list of previous clients, as well as references for each of the consultants assigned to the project. Briefly describe the scope of the work for these references, the year completed and a contact name and phone number for each one.
- **Cost for Services** – Provide the standard hourly rates for the firm overall plus each of the consultants assigned, including, if applicable, any sort of blended hourly rates typically applied.

TIMELINE FOR CONSULTANT SELECTION

Please submit proposals by **Friday, September 16, 2022**. Proposals should be sent via email in PDF form to newarkinfo@lisc.org. Questions or more information regarding this RFQ should be sent to this email address. LISC anticipates selecting a consultant on or before **Friday, October 28, 2022**.

GNL may reach out to respondents to conduct interviews to secure further information and direct questions contained in and beyond respective submissions.

LISC is an EEO/AA organization committed to Diversity/Equity/Inclusion/Justice; and encourages applications from minority-and women-owned enterprises and/or other protected classes.