



Office of Contracting and Procurement

November 17, 2023

**TO ALL PROSPECTIVE OFFERORS**

The University of the District of Columbia, Office of Contracting and Procurement, kindly invites you to submit your proposal to provide all necessary services and assistance in the Branding and Marketing Services for the University of the District of Columbia.

Please be guided by UDC Solicitation No. GF-2024-R-0016 attached, in preparing your response.

Thank you for your consideration and participation.

*Denise Joyner*

Denise Joyner  
Contract Specialist

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**SOLICITATION NO.:** PO-GF-2024-R-0016

**CAPTION:** Branding and Marketing Services for the University of the District of Columbia

**ISSUE DATE:** November 17, 2023

**CLOSING DATE:** January 9, 2024

**QUESTIONS DUE:** November 28, 2023, by 11:00 am EST

**QUESTIONS RESPONSE:** December 5, 2023, by 11:00 am EST

**CLOSING TIME:** 12 p.m. EST

**CONTRACT SPECIALIST:** Denise Joyner, [djoyner@udc.edu](mailto:djoyner@udc.edu)

**PHONE NUMBER.:** 202-274-5423

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The University of the District of Columbia (UDC), Office of Contracting and Procurement on behalf of the Office of Marketing and Communications (OMC) seeks a full-service marketing firm with expertise in branding, rebranding, strategic communications, and image building for institutions of higher education. The selected marketing firm will assist the University in developing messaging whereby UDC's communities are engaged and informed and its vision for One UDC is maintained. Ultimately, the firm shall make recommendations on marketing strategies for enrollment and media buys to better communicate this new vision to its many constituencies.

This RFP does not constitute an offer and is intended solely to obtain competitive bids from which UDC may choose a firm that best meets its needs.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

UDC is an HBCU, the only public University in the nation's capital and the only exclusively urban land-grant University in the United States. It supports a broad education, research, and community service mission across undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees. UDC has four colleges (Agriculture, Urban Sustainability & Environmental Sciences; Arts and Sciences; Business and Public Administration; and Engineering and Applied Sciences); a law school (David A. Clarke School of Law); a Community College offering certificates and associate degrees; and Workforce Development programs. The University has about 3,700 students and we're looking for a marketing firm to present innovative ideas to increase our enrollment. The University is a diverse institution offering many opportunities to achieve educational degrees that will engage our current students while attracting prospective students from afar.

UDC is embarking upon a significant rebranding initiative to revitalize its image and shift attitudes to increase enrollment. The University has identified a set of strategic planning goals that will produce enhanced experiences for students, faculty and staff and cultivate strategic partnerships to work toward the President's goal of One UDC as the institution of choice.

As a prominent land-grant institution in the city, UDC demonstrates to the DC community and its stakeholders its success in its educational and public service mission while reassuring the DC Council that it is governing itself wisely. UDC demonstrates this by providing an array of enhanced online programs. If the students can't get to UDC, UDC will come to the students.

UDC welcomes unconventional students. Many are the first in their families to attend a university. Some may have challenges that make commitments for a full-time curriculum hard to achieve. It is UDC's commitment to embrace all students to

broaden our reach and build a more diverse student body to achieve the goal of One UDC.

UDC is an institution on the move and strives to be seen as a positive destination of choice.

### **III. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The Offeror shall submit one proposal in response to the RFP for consideration, inclusive of all required information. Each proposal shall be submitted electronically to [djoyner@udc.edu](mailto:djoyner@udc.edu) by 12 p.m. EST on **January 9, 2024**. The subject line of the email shall indicate: **“Response to RFP for Branding and Marketing for the University of the District of Columbia Solicitation No. GF-2024-R-0016.”**

Proposals must be signed by the individual or authorized principal of the responding party. Responses submitted shall be valid for a minimum of 60 days from the day of the closing of the RFP. All responses to this RFP, except for propriety information, shall be subject to public scrutiny after the review process. The Offeror shall disclose in its proposal any information it deems to be proprietary.

Recipients of this solicitation not responding with an offer should not return this solicitation. Instead, they should advise the Contract Specialist via email whether they want to receive future solicitations for similar requirements. UDC requests that such recipients advise the Contract Specialist of the reason for not submitting a bid in response to this solicitation. If a recipient does not submit an offer and does not notify the Contract Specialist that future solicitations are desired, the recipient’s name may be removed from the applicable mailing list.

Proposals should not exceed 10 pages, excluding appendices.

### **IV. QUESTIONS**

If an Offeror has questions relative to the RFP, the Offeror shall submit the questions, in writing, to Contract Specialist, Denise Joyner at [djoyner@udc.edu](mailto:djoyner@udc.edu) by **11 a.m. EST on November 28, 2023**. UDC will not consider any questions received after the specified time and date. UDC will furnish all prospective bidders with final responses by **12 p.m. EST on December 5, 2023**. Responses to questions will be posted at [www.udc.edu/solicitations](http://www.udc.edu/solicitations) under Solicitation GF-2024-R-0016.

An amendment to the solicitation will be issued if that information is necessary in submitting bids or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any prospective bidders. Oral explanations or instructions given before the contract award will not be binding.

**V. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE**

The base performance period will tentatively commence on February 1, 2024, and shall not exceed September 30, 2024. The contract can be extended for four one-year option periods upon providing the contractor with sixty (60) days' prior notice to exercise an option and upon availability of funding for future option periods. Contractor must receive a Notice to Proceed or a Purchase Order prior to providing services for options periods.

**VI. ISSUING OFFICE AND SOLICITATION NUMBER**

The University of the District of Columbia Office of Contracting and Procurement is the issuing office for this RFP and all subsequent addenda relating to it. The reference number for the transaction is RFP No. GF-2024-R-0016. This number must be referred to in all bids, correspondence and documentation relating to the RFP.

**VII. CONTRACT SPECIALIST**

The Contract Specialist for this solicitation is:

Denise Joyner  
Office of Contracting and Procurement  
4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Building 39, Room 246  
Washington, DC 20008  
Email: djoyner@udc.edu  
Phone: 202-274-5423

**VIII. PROPOSAL FORMAT**

Offerors shall conform to the following format in preparing their response to the solicitation:

- A. Performance Strategy
- B. History, Experience and Description of the Firm
- C. Portfolio or Samples of Work
- D. Résumés or Bios of Staff Assigned to the Project
- E. Method of Communications
- F. Point of Contact for the Request for Proposal
- G. Legal
- H. Conflicts of Interest
- I. Compensation and Fees
- J. References
- K. Statement of Assurance

The following outlines UDC's expectations in each of the above major sections:

**Performance Strategy**

This section shall describe the company's services that directly address the requirements under the Scope of Work.

**History, Experience and Description of the Firm**

This section shall include information about the firm's history servicing other public entities, particularly land-grant universities, and community colleges of the same size as UDC, if possible. Describe your firm's experience related to the services to be provided in response to this RFP and the overall nature and extent of your firm's expertise.

**Portfolio or Samples of Work**

This section shall include samples of your work or links to your portfolio materials.

**Résumés or Bios of Staff Assigned to Project**

This section shall provide the names and résumés or bios of consultants assigned to this project, the relative time commitment of different team members and the role each will assume. Professional certification should be included, as appropriate.

**Method of Communication**

This section shall describe the firm's communication methods with UDC and provide updates, progress reports and results (i.e., email, telephone, share drive).

**Point of Contact for the Request for Proposal**

This section shall list the name and contact information not limited to telephone number and email address. The selected person should be knowledgeable of the information submitted in the proposal and be available to answer questions during normal business operation hours (8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. EST, Monday–Friday).

**Legal**

This section shall identify and describe any litigation, mediation, arbitration, administrative proceedings, or investigation in which your firm is or was involved within the last five years.

**Conflicts of Interest**

This section shall disclose any potential conflicts of interest the firm may have in performing these services for UDC.

**Compensation and Fees**

This section shall indicate the firm fixed price for the requested services:

1. The contractor shall list the consultants' hourly rate for the term of the entire contract
2. Other expenses or costs associated with this project upon UDC approval

### **References**

Offerors should include at least three (3) business references for similar projects that may be contacted to verify your firm's professional qualifications. References are required and shall be submitted with the proposal and include the name, position, title, business mailing address, telephone number and email address for each.

### **Statement of Assurance**

This section shall affirm your firm is not violating any rules and regulations that may impact your firm's operations.

### **Other Requirements**

#### **Compliance With Governing Laws**

Offerors shall comply with all applicable federal, state and District of Columbia statutes, rules, and regulations.

#### **Indemnification**

Offerors shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless UDC, its officers, agents and employees from any claims and costs of any nature, whether for personal injury, property damage or other liability, arising out of or in any way connected with the firm's negligent acts or omissions.

## **IX. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS**

UDC will screen each proposal to determine whether the qualifications and experience required under this proposal are met and whether all required proposal elements are included.

The UDC evaluation committee will evaluate each complete, qualified proposal based on the criteria listed below in Section X. **AWARD (1-70 technical points) and price (1-30 points)**. UDC will contact the top-ranking offerors to make a 30-minute virtual presentation to the UDC evaluation committee.

Offerors will be informed of the prospective awardee after evaluation of the proposals and presentation. Proposals will not be returned and will remain the property of UDC.

If additional information is required, UDC will contact the Offeror. Other than inquiries for clarification of the RFP, prospective contractors should not make unsolicited telephone calls or other contact with UDC with respect to the RFP or the status of proposals.

## X. AWARD

The contract will be awarded to one responsive and responsible contractor whose bid is most advantageous to UDC. The University reserves the right to reject any or all bids deemed to be inadequate or unacceptable. UDC may award a contract based on initial offers received without discussions. Therefore, each initial offer should contain the Offeror's best terms regarding price (firm fixed price) and professional qualifications.

In awarding the contract, UDC will independently evaluate each offer and make selections based on these criteria listed from most important (1) to least important (6) as follows:

- A. Professional experience in servicing public land-grant institutions and academic industry **(1-10 points)**.
- B. Experience in marketing strategies **(1-15 points)**.
- C. Qualifications of key consultants and their résumés or bios **(1-15 points)**.
- D. Satisfaction of clients as evidenced by reference checks of present and former clients **(1-10 points)**.
- E. Overall responsiveness and clarity of the submitted proposal **(1-20 points)**.
- F. Price **(1-30 points)**.

### *Note:*

Under the provisions of the "Small, Local, and Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Development and Assistance Act of 2005" (the Act), Title II, Subtitle N, of the "Fiscal Year 2006 Budget Support Act of 2005," DC Law 16-33, effective October 20, 2005, UDC shall apply preferences in evaluating bids or proposals from businesses that are small, local, disadvantaged, resident-owned, longtime resident or local with a principal office located in an enterprise zone of the District of Columbia.

### **Contract Type**

This will be a firm fixed price contract. Costs and expenses incurred by Offerors for developing information in response to the RFP are entirely the responsibility of the Offeror and shall *not* be billable to UDC.

### **Confidentiality**

All confidential documents and information provided by the Offerors must be identified as such by placing the word "**CONFIDENTIAL**" on each page of the document. UDC will treat such documents as confidential to the extent permitted by law. All proposals become public information at the proposal opening date and time.



## **XI. SCOPE OF WORK**

The Office of Marketing and Communications (OMC) requires a firm to develop a customized marketing strategy tailored to UDC's unique goals and brand identity. The selected firm will provide full-service marketing services for OMC for fiscal year 2024, as needed. In alignment with the University's goal of One UDC, the firm must launch initiatives to solidify and elevate its identity, requiring rebranding and marketing campaigns and deliverables, as required. Additionally, the firm shall support UDC's efforts in recruitment activities to drive and support the enrollment process.

Work closely with university stakeholders to conceptualize and recommend branding and marketing strategy development and implementation based on UDC's goals defined by the OMC. Execute the development, media buying and placement for ads across all University outdoor, broadcast, print and digital mediums. Develop copy and creative materials for a higher-education audience.

Implement tracking mechanisms, analytics and reporting to monitor campaign performance and user engagement, including digital, print, broadcast, and outdoor ads. Provide regular reports outlining progress and suggesting adjustments for optimal results in a higher-education environment.

Design and develop a refreshed brand identity, including typography and brand and style guidelines for the University's community. Create visual and written content for various marketing channels, ensuring consistent messaging. Develop and provide wide-ranging design needs, including template creation.

Conduct comprehensive market research to identify and target the University's audience segments, industry trends and competitive landscape. Analyze results to determine marketing strategies.

Engage with OMC's website redesign team to ensure a responsive and user-friendly website optimized for search engines and conversions. Execute result-driven digital marketing campaigns for higher education, including SEO, Pay-Per-Click, social media, email and content marketing. Implement a strategy for creating compelling video products, including storyboarding, planning, filming, and editing.

Develop a strategy for creating higher-education publications. Oversee production and management of print publications.

Curate video and photography for cross-platform use and provide high-quality filming and editing services to bolster our digital content.

**Technical Requirements**

To meet the requirements of the Scope of Work, firms must have technical and applied experience with all the systems or software listed below:

1. Adobe Creative Cloud
2. Google Analytics

**Other Requirements:**

To meet the requirements of the Scope of Work, the preferred firm will have experience working with universities and must:

- a. Provide full-service agency support with the ability to deploy resources and staffing experts who are skilled to support the service scope, with preferred experience working in higher ed.
- b. Can provide comprehensive marketing guidance and direction to OMC staff.
- c. Have experience conducting extensive research and developing marketing campaigns and promotions for higher-education institutions.
- d. Demonstrate experience managing marketing projects with a track record for on-time and on-budget delivery.

**XII. PRICING**

All prospective contractors must submit a detailed price proposal and cost breakdown that captures all the elements of the Statement of Work. The total contract price must include all costs. The contract will not contain any separate fees or costs for expenses.