



Save the Dunes Request for Proposals: Website, Marketing and Communication Services

Date Issued: 3/12/2021 Submissions Due: 4/1/2021

This Request for Proposals is intended to solicit competitive responses from local contractors to develop a marketing and communications plan, and a new website for our organization.

All applicants are encouraged to review this solicitation thoroughly prior to submitting. Save the Dunes reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

CONTACTS

The primary contact for questions regarding this RFP will be Katie Hobgood at katie@savedunes.org.

Save the Dunes is located at 444 Barker Road, Michigan City, IN 46360. The URL for the organization's website is <https://savedunes.org>. A copy of this RFP can be found under "News."

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Save the Dunes Conservation Fund, Inc. (Save the Dunes) is seeking proposals with cost estimates for the redesign of our website and with it, the development of a strategic marketing and communications plan by a qualified web-design consultant with expertise in marketing and communications ("Contractor"). Requested services include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a marketing and communications plan for the organization that:
 - Enhances fundraising opportunities
 - Builds brand awareness
 - Increases the effectiveness of social marketing strategies and public awareness campaigns
 - Identifies and refines the organization's key messages to increase reach to target audiences
- Establishing a professional, user-friendly web-interface to showcase the organization's mission, fundraising campaigns and programmatic work for our partners, communities and funders to:
 - Provide access to educational and outreach programming by integrating across all platforms access to in-person and online organizational events (i.e. webinars, fundraising campaigns, calls to action, etc.)
 - Streamline communications from social media platforms in a central location for broader reach and impact
 - Host a curated, photographic story-telling archive digitized online that documents the remarkable history, evolution and continued significance of the organization;
- Conducting planning sessions with our board of directors, staff, and key stakeholders;
- Conducting training sessions with staff to maintain website content
- Presenting project deliverables to staff and board members



The overarching goals of this contract are to:

- Develop a state-of-the-art website
- Develop a marketing and communications plan
- Inform and design marketing and communications strategies and tools to advance Save the Dunes' Strategic Plan programmatic goals
- Elevate awareness of Save the Dunes among diverse audiences
- Support internal communications
- Significantly increase website traffic and motivate visitors to financially support our organization

BACKGROUND

The mission of Save the Dunes is to preserve, protect and restore the Indiana dunes and all natural resources in Northwest Indiana's Lake Michigan Watershed for an enhanced quality of life.

The Indiana dunes region is renowned as the birthplace of ecology, home to complex ecosystems including over 1,100 plant species. Yet, for more than a century, people have struggled to keep this precious landscape from disappearing beneath harbors, breakwaters, steel mills, and unchecked development. In 1952, Ogden Dunes native Dorothy Buell founded Save the Dunes to protect the remaining untouched dunes of Northwest Indiana. One of our greatest triumphs was aiding in the establishment of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in 1966 and fostering several dune-expansion bills to increase its size to over 15,000 acres of lands and waters.

With a growing Indiana Dunes National Park, the Indiana Dunes State Park nestled in between, and within areas protected by land trusts and private entities, some may claim that the dunes are already saved. However, there are continuing pressures that threaten these celebrated lands and waters. Invasive species, water pollution, degraded habitats, development pressures, and more threaten the protection of the ecosystems of the Indiana Dunes and Lake Michigan for current and future generations. While "saving the dunes" looks differently than what it may have over 65 years ago, Save the Dunes Conservation Fund continues to play a significant role.

SCOPE OF WORK

1. **Create a robust, flexible and state-of-the-art website that is easy to maintain.**

Description of task: Using a responsive web design approach, the Contractor will develop a user-friendly, visually appealing website that can communicate constantly changing information to our key audiences, while also providing a robust landing page that houses our mission, history and programmatic work. The website should be in accordance with the developed marketing and communications plan. In addition, we require a web-based administration tool that allows key personnel to easily update content without directly accessing source code.

Some of the content on our current site will carry over, but the new website should incorporate some additional pages that provide overviews of our current program portfolio to highlight the work that we do, more details on the history of our organization (including photographs), and more digital



resources to educate and engage our stakeholders. The website should link to the organization's social media sites to show real-time updates and streamline these communications. The website should be able to house recorded content such as webinars and videos in an online resources section. An overall goal of telling our story, expanding our followers, and converting followers to donors should be considered. Currently we anticipate an additional 3-5 pages beyond what is on our current site, (savedunes.org) but request that price quotes include the cost of adding additional pages beyond this number. Save the Dunes staff will provide the content to be added to the pages.

2. Review current marketing and communication strategies, and develop a plan that focuses on building brand awareness, social marketing strategies, and public relations and stakeholder outreach.

Description of Task: The Contractor will work with the Executive Director and Staff to develop a communication and marketing plan that identifies the organization's key messages, target audience(s), and potential communication actions. The selected contractor will be charged with reviewing current practices and identifying strategies to improve outreach and communication efforts. The contractor will help build unique messaging around Save the Dunes' programmatic work and mission.

3. Design and conduct working sessions with board members, staff, and key stakeholders.

Description of Task: The Contractor will work with the Executive Director and Staff to design and conduct working sessions with the Board of Directors, staff, and key stakeholders to review and identify strategic communication and marketing priorities, as well as build cohesive narratives for the organization to utilize in its communications.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

RFP Issued: 3/12/2021

Deadline for Proposed Submission: 4/1/2021

Contractor Selected & Notified: 4/15/2021

Project Completed: 8/31/2021

REQUIREMENTS OF CONTRACTOR – REQUIRED EXPERTISE

The minimum requirements of the Contractor should include the following expertise and experience:

- A Bachelor's degree in marketing and communication strategies, environmental non-profit website design, and/or some combination of demonstratable equivalent experience
- 5-10 years of experience with website design for small-to-medium non-profit organizations
- Strategic communications planning for non-profit organizations
- Familiarity with environmental communications, preferably specific to coastal regions of the Indiana Dunes, Calumet region, Chicago region and/or Great Lakes region
- Strategizing communications based on changing needs of a client
- Content development to support small to medium-scale websites



- Be able to provide examples of five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- Training diverse stakeholders and client staff on communications tactics and messaging.
- Training diverse stakeholders and client staff on website updating and use.
- Evaluating and assessing the effectiveness and reach of public education and social marketing campaign(s).
- Contractors must have the capacity to provide all labor and equipment to complete the project.
- Contractor must assign and identify at least one primary point of contact, including contact information, to Save the Dunes.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposal Submission

Proposals shall be sent by email only, marked clearly as “RFP for Save the Dunes Website, Marketing and Communication Services”, to Katie Hobgood at katie@savedunes.org. Proposals shall be submitted no later than 11:59pm on 4/1/2021.

Save the Dunes will not be responsible for any expenses incurred by any firm or person preparing or submitting a proposal.

Submission Requirements

Pricing

Quotes should include all costs associated with the project, and break into specific categories. A detailed budget (not lump sum) is required.

Evidence of the Ability to Obtain Insurance

The successful Contractor shall be required to provide for and maintain, at its own cost and expense, adequate insurance coverage and workers’ compensation insurance until the completion of the work. The successful Contractor shall ensure that any subcontractors hired carry insurance with the same limits and provisions provided herein.

Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on how well they meet the Scope of Work identified in this RFP, budget efficiency, and the Contractor’s capability to perform the work based on qualifications and experience. Save the Dunes reserves the right to solicit additional information from the Contractor should they see fit.