

## Sample Request for Proposal (RFP)

Once you've determined that you need a consultant, you might consider creating a request for proposal (RFP) document. This is a critical part of finding the right person for the job. A good RFP is also one that leads to unambiguous proposals that can be scored relative to each other and to your expected performance standards and outcomes. You can model your RFP on the sample provided below.

### A. Statement of Purpose

Your RFP should begin with a brief description of the project for which you are seeking a consultant. In this section, you may also wish to include information about the project's maximum budget. Provide the date by which responses should be sent, and direct applicants to a later section that will offer further submission details.

*Example:*

*The Great Scott Arts Association in Anytown, TN, is seeking a consultant or consultants to assist in its initial set-up, in the analysis of possible administrative and performing space, and in the creation of a staffing plan.*

### B. Background Information

In this section, simply provide a clear, detailed description of your organization and its work. If possible, you should also include statistics and demographics that relate to your service area and target population. The level of detail you use in this section should be determined by what information the responder will need in order to prepare an adequate proposal.

*Example:*

*The GSAA was established in 1991 to assist several existing cultural groups in Anytown and to promote and coordinate arts activities in the area. Cultural organizations in Anytown include a community theater, community orchestra, the county historical society and a separate history museum, a community art school, and a Comprehensive Arts Planning Program (CAPP) group. To date, GSAA has nonprofit and tax-exempt status and a board of directors, but no staff or office space.*

### C. Tasks to be Accomplished

This is the meat of your RFP document. It should include details about the specific duties you're expecting the contractor to perform, as well as the outcomes you are anticipating. You'll also

want to include a timeline for delivering work and outline your methods for monitoring performance. Additionally, provide a list of the finished products the consultant will deliver to your organization, and when each product should be completed.

Some experts feel that an RFP should dictate “what” and not “how” by providing objectives rather than a detailed task list. This approach gives applicants the creative license to use their expertise in designing their approach to the issues outlined in your RFP.

Some organizations will choose to break this section down into subsections, such as: scope of work, outcome and performance standards, and deliverables.

*Example:*

*Task 1: Continue development of the Association and its plan for the future*

1. *Work with a task force of member organizations to determine what joint needs the GSAA should address and write GSAA by-laws by end of period of performance.*
  - 1.1. *Timeline: Adjourn task force by February 2019.*
  - 1.2. *Outcome: GSAA will be better-positioned to address its needs in a well structured environment.*
2. *Implement a general membership structure and campaign.*
  - 2.1. *Timeline: Complete structure document and campaign outline by March 2019, and initiate campaign by May 2019.*
  - 2.2. *Outcome: GSAA will have a clarified membership structure that positions it to solicit new membership.*

*Task 2: Research possible funding sources*

1. *Identify possible local and national funding sources.*
  - 1.1. *Timeline: Begin research immediately, and continue throughout the period of performance; provide a list of potential donors.*
  - 1.2. *Outcome: GSAA will have a stronger funding base, including local and national sources, and private and public sources.*

*Summary of Deliverables*

*All deliverables are due by the end of the period of performance.*

1. *By-law document*
2. *Membership structure document and campaign outline*
3. *List of potential donors*

## D. Contract Details

This section provides details that a potential consultant would want to know up-front.

- Period of Performance – Specify the length of the contract, including start date, end date, and the options for renewal.
- Payment, Incentives, and Penalties – List the terms of payment for adequate performance. Highlight the basis for incentives and penalties. Include the maximum fee for the project.
- Contractual Terms and Conditions – Here, you'll attach contracting forms, certifications, and assurances. You might also want to include requirements specific to this particular contract.

## E. How to Submit a Proposal

This section details instructions your applicants must follow in submitting a response to your RFP.

*Example:*

*Please submit the following no later than October 9 to Cheryl Jackson, GSAA, 116 8th Street, Anytown, TN 38103; cjackson@gsaa.org. Electronic versions welcome.*

- 1. A technical approach, which describes how you will carry out the tasks outlined above.*
- 2. A summary of your recent and relevant projects.*
- 3. A firm estimate of the fees to be charged and an estimate of expenses that would be incurred.*
- 4. Resumes of all consultants who would be involved in the project.*
- 5. Names, phone numbers, and email addresses of individuals at three nonprofit organizations who have been your clients during the last eighteen months and whom we can contact as references.*

*We will hold interviews with finalists during the week of October 12, 2018. If you have questions, please email them to cjackson@gsaa.org.*