



Request for Proposal: Communications Consultant

The Anne Arundel Watershed Stewards Academy (WSA) is a 501 © 3 non-profit organization, created out of a partnership between Arlington Echo Outdoor Education Center and the Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works to build capacity of Anne Arundel County neighborhood residents to reduce pollutants entering local waterways via stormwater. Our hands-on training course gives Stewards the tools to bring change to their communities, by turning knowledge and good intentions into action. Stewards work with communities to install projects such as rain gardens or conservation landscapes that capture polluted runoff. Collectively, these community and individual actions add up to better health for our local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay.

Launched in 2009, WSA has certified over 200 Certified Master Watershed Stewards and a *Consortium of Support Professionals* including over 80 governmental, nonprofit and business professionals who provide technical assistance to Master Watershed Stewards by consulting on design and development of watershed restoration projects. The staff consists of four full time staff (Executive Director, Restoration Coordinator, Program Coordinator, Development and Communications Coordinator) and two part time staff (System Administrator and Outreach Coordinator).

This year, Watershed Stewards will lead their communities to:

- Build hundreds of in-the-ground restoration projects that clean polluted runoff
- Plant over 12,000 native plants and trees
- Share information about conservation practices with almost 15,000 citizens in Anne Arundel County

Additional information about this dynamic organization may be found our website aawsa.org.

Goals and Context

The WSA is seeking a communications consultant to assist the Development and Communications Coordinator (Coordinator) to revise and re-focus our communications plan toward specific engagement goals. These include:

1. Using the WSA 10th Anniversary (events and celebrations planned from September 2018-September 2019) as a platform, improve engagement of existing constituents and raise visibility to the broader Anne Arundel County through consultation on and mentoring through the execution of our existing communications plan.
2. Enhance existing written and visual content to engage current audience and reach new constituents

Scope of Work

1. Critically review our existing communications plan and collaboratively revise that plan to achieve the goals below. The Consultant should carefully consider of the capacity of the Coordinator as the plan is revised. Approximately 15-20 hours per week may be spent by the Coordinator on the execution of this plan.
 - a. Increase the engagement of audiences who are only partially engaged with WSA, with metrics to measure this.
 - b. Increase our visibility in the broader Anne Arundel County, with metrics to measure this.
2. Strategically mentor the Development and Communications Coordinator to adaptively manage this plan to ensure metrics are met.
3. Mentor the WSA Development and Communications Coordinator to improve written and visual content related to the communications plan. This may include review of specific communications and assistance in gathering and using photo and video clips at strategic events.

Competitive proposals may also include:

1. A specific approach to increase WSA's video content.
 - a. Collection of quality video clips of Stewards and programs
 - b. Consulting on the creation of a promotional video for WSA
 - c. Implementation of video in our communications plan

Proposals should include:

1. A specific approach, deliverables and schedule for achieving the scope of work above. This should include the number of in-person hours anticipated for meetings directly with WSA staff,

and a sense of the WSA time commitment required to respond to consultant requests or prepare for in person meetings.

2. Demonstration of work with other non-profit organizations of similar size, budget and age. This should include a sample communications plan and references.
3. A strong sense of your philosophy: Based on what you know today, your initial sense of the broad direction and opportunities that you see for us. [ESK1]
4. An itemized budget, including hourly rate(s) for consultant team members.

Timeline, Compensation and Contacts

1. Timeline: Consultant should begin work in August 2018 and submit final deliverables in September 2019. The following important events should be considered when developing the timeline. It is not necessary for the consultant to be present for all of these events, but these are examples of opportunities to promote the organization.
 - a. 10th Anniversary Kick-Off Celebration: Sunday, September 23rd, 2018
 - b. WSA begins training its next cohort of Master Watershed Stewards, October 27
 - c. WSA Class 10 graduation, December 2018
 - d. WSA Annual Conference: Saturday, February 23rd, 2019
2. Compensation: Not to exceed \$5,000
3. Consultant shall report directly to the Development and Communications Coordinator
4. Proposal Due: Friday, August 17, 2018 by 5:00 EST via email:
Katie Foster
WSA Development and Communications Coordinator
wsaforms@gmail.com
5. Questions may be directed to Katie Foster, WSA Development and Communications Coordinator, via kefoster@aacps.org or (410) 222 3831.

Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated success of consultant in working with similar non-profit organizations.
2. Demonstrated understanding of WSA's mission, along with a general familiarity with local environmental issues and demographic and philanthropic landscape of Anne Arundel County, Maryland.
3. Cost effective interventions that are likely to achieve results.
4. Ability to meet in-person with the WSA staff as-needed during the duration of this contract.
5. Innovation and specificity of approach and deliverables.
6. Capacity to deliver the scope of services requested in this RFP.

