

**Title:** SOI # 1122 Branding and Design Experts

**Agency:** Children & Family Services, NYS Office of Bureau of Contract Management

**Contract Number:** TBD

**Contract term:** 5/1/2023 – 12/30/2023

**Date of issue:** 2/8/2023

**Due date/time:** 3/8/2023 by 4:00 PM Eastern Time

**Location:** Statewide

### **Background**

The New York State Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS) announces a Solicitation of Interest (SOI) for qualified MWBE/SDVOB/SBE entities that are full service graphic design and marketing/branding organizations with an understanding of content management platforms and digital online resources. This advertisement is public notice that OCFS is seeking to contract with organizations to cultivate our NYS Council on Children and Families (CCF) brand consistent with NYS branding guidelines and accessibility requirements to develop cohesion among CCF initiatives through messaging, printed media, and the digital environment.

The purpose of this SOI is to invite any eligible and interested entities that satisfy this program's needs to inform OCFS by a Letter of Interest (LOI). To be considered responsive, your organization's LOI should be received no later than the deadline specified on the first page of this announcement. Please see the **How to Respond** section for additional information and submission requirements. OCFS intends to select one contractor based on the criteria outlined in this announcement.

This opportunity is authorized under Section 163 of State Finance Law as a Discretionary Purchase. OCFS intends to contract pursuant to its discretionary purchasing authority under State Finance Law Section 163(6), which authorizes purchases without a formal competitive process in certain circumstances. This funding opportunity is limited to purchases up to the Discretionary Buying Threshold from respondent organizations qualified as:

- New York State Small Business Enterprises (SBE)
- New York State certified Minority and/or Women-Owned Enterprises (M/WBE)
- New York State certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Businesses (SDVOB)

NYS-certified MWBE and SDVOB are qualified pursuant to [Article 15-A of State Executive Law](#) and [Section 163 of State Finance Law](#). In accordance with [Section 160\(8\) of State Finance Law](#), NYS SBE are defined as a small business concern that is domiciled in NYS, independently owned and operated, not dominant in its field, and employs 100 or less persons.

Primary respondents that are certified and/or qualify as a MWBE, SBE, or SDVOB should complete, sign, and submit the **Attachment 3 – Affirmation of Business Status** provided with this solicitation.

### **Scope of Work**

1. Using an interactive and iterative process, meet with CCF team members and understand CCF's target audience, vision, and mission to develop a CCF brand identity. Identify the features of our agency which should increase awareness of our brand, trust of our brand, identify our unique qualities, assets, support the cohesion of our initiatives, and support the coordination of the cross-systems that support children and families in NYS.
2. Tangible deliverables of our brand will include visual assets, our brand voice and messaging, style guide, color palette, and packaging (if needed).
3. Identify brand strategy and how to integrate new branding throughout the agency including prioritizing guidance on building a dynamic web presence.
4. Brand strategy will also include planning how to integrate branding in social media, print media, conferencing, and presentations consistent with NYS branding.
5. Provide photography studio services in addition to stock imagery as requested.
6. Provide measurement and evaluation strategy to assess impact and effectiveness of branding and messaging.
7. Provide electronic source files of all products developed in the following formats (e.g., pdf, jpg, tif, png) and deliverables include all files being shared in a format that would be applicable to a web environment.
8. Work will include submission of a project management timeline to meet deliverables identified in items 1-4, including revision and edits, and length and frequency of meetings with CCF.
9. Chosen vendor will be expected to use their own office supplies, computer software, computer, phone, and virtual meeting platforms. Virtual platforms must be compatible with NYS and may include MS Teams, Cisco WebEx, Zoom, or other compatible software.

For the purposes of this bid, OCFS anticipates the total hours to be worked may vary from 250 to 500 hours, with no guarantee of the specific number of hours to be worked. Actual hours worked will vary depending on the process and strategy utilized by the successful contractor.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

Interested parties who meet the following criteria are eligible to respond:

- Be one or more of the following types of organizations:
  - NYS-certified Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE)
  - NYS-certified Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Business (SDVOB)
  - NYS-domiciled Small Business Enterprise (SBE)
- Agree to provide the services requested by this SOI in the **Scope of Work** section.
- Have five (5) years of experience in a marketing and branding field and/or have an established portfolio of clients (possessing either or both is satisfactory).
- Possess a bachelor's degree in graphic design, marketing, communications, or another related field.
- Possess digital and technological capacity with an understanding of web-based environments.
- Be eligible to do business with New York State.

## **Funding Details**

This contract will be funded by the Preschool Development Birth through Five Grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care. The vendor will invoice quarterly based upon completion of deliverables included in the performance based workplan. Vendor must show proof of completing each deliverable to receive payment.

Funding for this project is contingent upon the availability of funds in the state and/or federal budgets and may be subject to change. The vendor will be paid for actual hours worked using the hourly rate provided in their response to this solicitation.

## **Term of Contract**

Contract(s) awarded in response to this solicitation will be for eight (8) months. The anticipated start date is 5/1/2023, and the anticipated end date is 12/30/2023. Funding is currently anticipated to be available. The award of a contract does not guarantee that funding will remain available. Contractors may not begin providing services before the contract start date; OCFS has no obligation to pay for services rendered before the New York State Office of the State Comptroller and the Office of the Attorney General approve the contract.

## **How to Respond**

To be considered responsive, interested parties should complete and submit all required documents in conformance with the format and content requirements as explained. A response that does not provide all the information requested may be subject to rejection. The response should contain sufficient information to assure OCFS of its accuracy. The information provided should, wherever possible, verify that your organization meets the requirements in the **Eligibility Criteria** section of this solicitation.

**Responses must be emailed to [RFP@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:RFP@ocfs.ny.gov) and should be received by the due date and time specified on the first page of this announcement.**

Interested parties should complete and provide the following documents:

- Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest (please include your hourly rate)
- Attachment 2 – Submission Checklist
- Attachment 3 – Affirmation of Business Status
- Resume(s)
- Proof of Degree(s)
- Portfolio(s) that demonstrate having established clients in a marketing and branding field with evidence of digital and technological capacity and an understanding of web-based environments (may be provided as documents and/or weblinks)

Additionally, each interested party may provide the following optional documents:

- [OCFS-2647, EO 177 Certification](#)
- [OCFS-4821, CMS User Authorization](#)

The subject line of the email submission of your response should include the following information: **SOI # 1122 Branding and Design Experts**. Additionally, please clearly identify the vendor's name in the body of the email and in the filenames of attached documents to ensure your submission is processed efficiently. **Early submissions are encouraged as late responses may be subject to rejection.**

Please limit your Letter of Interest to a maximum of two (2) page(s), Arial 12-point font, single line spacing and one-inch margins. Please see the **Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest** provided for your reference. The **Portfolio** does not count towards this recommended page limit and may be provided to OCFS via document attachments or as links to relevant websites and/or works that are hosted online.

OCFS will provide a confirmation email that the submission has been received. OCFS will not be liable for any costs incurred by interested parties in the preparation of documents submitted in response to this solicitation. Vendors may modify, in writing, or withdraw the content of any submission at any time prior to the due date and time.

## **Questions**

Questions should be submitted via e-mail to [RFP@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:RFP@ocfs.ny.gov) prior to the due date and time specified on the first page of this announcement. The subject line should include the following information: **SOI # 1122 Branding and Design Experts**. Please submit your question(s) with adequate time for response. OCFS recommends allowing at least five (5) business days. **Late questions may not be addressed.**

Under the requirement of the Procurement Lobbying Act all communications regarding advertised projects are to be channeled only through the primary contact identified herein.

## **Evaluation Process**

An internal review by OCFS will confirm eligibility. This solicitation is not a guarantee or promise of funding. Available funding to support this initiative will be limited to the amount(s) appropriated in the enacted budget for this purpose and will be awarded to the interested organization deemed to best meet the eligibility requirements.

OCFS may require additional information from an organization before deciding whether the interested organization is eligible and can supply the requested commodities or services. If OCFS requests additional information, it must be provided within five (5) business days from request or as otherwise directed in the request.

Upon vendor selection, OCFS will notify all applicants of their status. Applicants may be asked to submit a work plan and budget with justifications as well as other completed documents necessary to develop a contract(s).

## **OCFS Reserved Rights**

OCFS reserves the right to withdraw, amend or postpone this solicitation, without notice, and without liability, to any applicant, or other party, and may exercise these rights at any time. In addition, OCFS reserves the right to:

- place a monetary cap on the funding amount made in each contract award;
- change any of the schedule dates stated in the solicitation;
- make an award under this solicitation in whole or in part;
- disqualify any applicant whose conduct and/or LOI fails to conform to the requirements of this solicitation;
- reject any LOI if, in the sole discretion of OCFS, it determines the applicant is not a responsible vendor;
- request all applicants who submitted LOIs to present supplemental information clarifying their proposals either in writing or by formal presentation;
- direct all organizations who submitted LOIs to prepare modifications addressing solicitation amendments;
- make funding decisions that maximize compliance with and address the outcomes identified in this solicitation;
- fund only one portion, or selected activities, of the selected applicant's LOI and/or adopt all or part of the selected applicant's LOI based on federal and state requirements;
- eliminate any solicitation requirements unmet by all applicants, upon notice to all parties that submitted LOIs;
- waive procedural technicalities, or modify minor irregularities, in LOI received, after notification to the applicant involved;
- correct any arithmetic errors in any proposal, or make typographical corrections to LOIs, with the concurrence of the applicant;
- negotiate with the eligible applicant(s) prior to contract award;
- require that all LOIs be held valid for a minimum of 180 days from the closing date for receipt of applications, unless otherwise expressly provided for in writing;
- fund any or all of the LOIs received in response to this solicitation. However, issuance

of this solicitation does not commit OCFS to fund any proposals. OCFS can reject any proposals submitted;

- use the LOI submitted in response to this solicitation as part of an approved contract. At the time of contract development, awardees may be asked to provide additional budget and program information for the final contract;
- utilize any and all ideas submitted in the LOI received where an award is ultimately made;
- make inquiries of third parties, including but not limited to applicant's references, regarding the applicant's experience or other matters deemed relevant by OCFS. By submitting an LOI in response to this solicitation, the applicant gives its consent to any inquiry made by OCFS;
- where applicable, require contractors to participate in a formal evaluation of the program to be developed by OCFS. Contractors may be required to collect data for these purposes. The evaluation design will maintain participants' confidentiality and recognize practical constraints of collecting this kind of information;
- when applicable, consider statewide distribution and regional distribution within New York City, including borough distribution methodology, in evaluating proposals; and
- reject any extraneous terms, alternate activities/work to be performed, added conditions, or exceptions stated by applicants within their LOI. This includes, but is not limited to, proposed changes to the standard terms and conditions of the resulting contract(s).

### **Contract Documents**

Interested parties must review the contract terms and conditions of the contract template provided below.

If applying, your organization must read, understand, and accept all provisions of Appendix A – Standard Clauses for NYS Contracts. Appendix A contains important information related to the contract to be entered into as a result of this announcement and will be incorporated, without change or amendment, into the contract entered into between OCFS and the selected organization(s). By submitting a response to this announcement, your organization agrees to comply with all the provisions of Appendix A, and A-3 Federal Assurances and Certifications Please review the sample non-grant contract template, which includes the Appendix A, Appendix A-3 available at:

<https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/docs/Non-Grant-Contract-Template.pdf>.

In addition, the following documents may be required prior to contracting:

- [Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire](#) (if applicable)
- [Proof of Workers' Compensation Insurance](#) (if applicable)
- [Proof of Disability Benefits Coverage](#) (if applicable)
- [ST-220-CA Contractor Certification to Covered Agency](#) (if applicable)
- Appendix A-3
- [OCFS-3460, Equal Employment Opportunity \(EEO\) Policy Statement](#)

## **Diversity**

OCFS is committed to identifying, addressing, and reducing disproportionality and to eliminating racial and ethnic disparities in our systems of care and custody. Authentic partnerships and joint decision-making with families and communities promote social justice and race equity to address disproportionality and disparities in the provision of services to children and families. OCFS strongly encourages qualified minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses to submit a letter of interest in response to this announcement.

## **Contact Information**

### **Primary contact:**

Director of Contracts  
NYS Office of Children & Family Services  
52 Washington Street  
Room 202S – Procurement Unit  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
[RFP@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:RFP@ocfs.ny.gov)

### **Submit to contact:**

Director of Contracts  
Office of Children & Family Services  
52 Washington Street  
Room 202S – Procurement Unit  
Rensselaer, NY 12144  
[RFP@ocfs.ny.gov](mailto:RFP@ocfs.ny.gov)

## **Attachments**

Please see the following attachments to this announcement, which are available on the New York State Contract Reporter website at <https://www.nyscr.ny.gov> or the OCFS website at <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/contracts/funding/>.

- Attachment 1 – Letter of Interest\*
- Attachment 2 – Submission Checklist\*
- Attachment 3 – Affirmation of Business Status \*

\* Attachments marked with an asterisk **must** be completed and included with your response submission.