



Project Title: Foundational Communications Project

RFP number: #0011

Issue date: March 13, 2017

Closing date and time: April 7, 2017 (5:00pm)

Submit to: Janet McCrimmon, Executive Director
Email: jmccrimmon@aislingdiscoveries.ca

Instructions for Submission: Electronic format emailed to the contact person

Invitation

In accordance with Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre's procurement policy, Aisling Discoveries is issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for an experienced consultant or team of consultants to review the current state of the organization's communications in light of best practices, make recommendations and implement strategies to strengthen these functions within the organization.

Proposals must be submitted by **5pm on April 7, 2017** for consideration. A description of Aisling Discoveries, the services required and other pertinent information is as follows:

About Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre

Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre strives to give children and their families the skills and knowledge not just to cope, but to thrive. Established in 1998, we are an accredited charitable organization providing prevention, early intervention, children's mental health and autism services primarily in Scarborough and East York. We work in partnership with families and communities to strengthen the emotional and social well-being of children and promote their healthy development. Serving almost 13,000 people last year, Aisling Discoveries' vision is a community where all children reach their full potential.

Aisling Discoveries has more than 200 staff including social workers, child and youth workers, speech and language pathologists, communicative disorders assistants, early childhood educators and behaviour therapists. We have 21 different programs delivered in 22 languages across three departments: Early Intervention and Community Programs; Clinical Services and Autism Services.

More information about Aisling Discoveries can be found here: <http://www.aislingdiscoveries.ca/>

Context for the Engagement

Aisling Discoveries is looking for a highly-skilled consultant or team of consultants to utilize their expert knowledge and skills related to communications. The purpose of this project is to provide advice the senior leadership team about how to strengthen the organization's communications functions. This project supports the achievement of two of the organization's strategic directions:

- To enhance the presence of Aisling Discoveries
- To increase funding sustainability

Through the organization's strategic planning process, it was identified that, while Aisling Discoveries has an excellent reputation amongst those who know about it, it is one of Toronto's "best kept secrets". The organization's goal is to develop and implement a comprehensive communications framework that includes communication policies and standards, a suite of communications materials and an interactive website. The organization would also like to explore developing a social media presence. The organization is also seeking recommendations regarding how best to staff the communications function in future.

Proposed Scope of Work

The work will include:

1. Meeting with Aisling Discoveries senior leadership to discuss background and finalize the plan for the project.
2. Review of existing communications materials (approximately 35 program brochures, flyers, presentations), website and relevant policies.
3. Providing education on best practices in communications and identifying opportunities for improving these functions within the organization.
4. Development of a comprehensive communications framework including standards and policies.
5. Development of the annual report for 2016-2017.
6. Development of a suite of communications materials for the organization.
7. Reviewing the current website and making recommendations for an improved website presence.
8. Recommendations regarding improving the social media presence for the organization.
9. Recommendations regarding staffing the communications functions on an ongoing basis.
10. Validation of findings with management, staff and the board.
11. Availability for on-call communications consultation.

Deliverables:

The project deliverables will include:

1. Communications best practices paper including recommendations for strengthening the communications functions within Aisling Discoveries.
2. Communications framework including policies and standards.
3. Suite of new/revised communications materials that are consistent with best practices including an annual report for 2016-2017 to be delivered prior to the June AGM.
4. Presentation to management, staff and board with draft findings for validation purposes.
5. Final report that incorporates feedback received.

Evaluation of Proposals and Selection of Winning Proposal

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Proposal includes all required elements.
2. Demonstrated understanding of the requirements of the project.
3. Relevant experience of the consultant(s) including:
 - a. Knowledge of best practices in communications
 - b. Knowledge/experience implementing communications that are compliant with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act information and communications standards
 - c. Experience implementing communications functions including excellent writing, design and communications planning skills
 - d. Experience working in and/or consulting to multi-service non-profit organizations
4. Appropriateness of proposed approach

5. Cost including consulting fees and any expenses
6. Interviews for short-listed consultants
7. References

In accordance with Aisling Discoveries' Procurement Policy and the Broader Public Sector's Procurement Directive, the winning quote will be awarded largely based on price but Aisling Discoveries retains the right to select a consultant(s) based on the quality of the proposal and the demonstrable expertise of that consultant(s).

The request for proposals must include:

- A description of relevant experiences
- Work plan for the project including activities, timelines and support required from the organization¹
- Budget for the project including consultant's fees and any expenses (include per hour consulting fees for any additional communications work not detailed in the proposal)
- C.V. for the consultant(s) who will be involved in the project
- Contact information for three references able to speak to experience with similar projects

Once the decision has been made, the selected consultant(s) and the other bidding consultants will be informed.

Summary of Deadlines/Timeframes

RFP circulated	March 13, 2017
Deadline for written questions to be submitted by consultants to Janet McCrimmon at jmccrimmon@aislingdiscoveries.ca	March 22, 2017
Responses to questions circulated to bidders ²	March 27, 2017
Deadline for bid submission	April 7, 2017 (5pm)

Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre Privilege:

Aisling Discoveries reserves the right to proceed with the RFP and to reject all or any of the proposals. The bidder assumes full liability for all cost incurred in developing the proposal for submission. If Aisling Discoveries accepts any of the proposals (which it is not obligated to do) the lowest or any fee will not necessarily be accepted and Aisling Discoveries may, as its sole discretion, consider any other factors it deems appropriate in its sole discretion in awarding the Contract. Aisling Discoveries may request further clarification of a proposal from the contractor. While Aisling Discoveries is not obligated to consider proposals, which do not strictly comply with its requirements, it nevertheless reserves the right to do so, and specifically reserves the right to waive formalities as its interest may require.

¹ In planning the work, consultants are encouraged to divide the work into discreet phases.

² To receive the responses to questions, consultants need to let Janet know by email that they are interested in bidding.