



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT: GREAT LAKES “BLUE ECONOMY”**

The Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors & Premiers (GSGP) unites the chief executives from Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Ontario, Pennsylvania, Québec, and Wisconsin. The Governors and Premiers work as equal partners to grow the region’s \$6 trillion economy and protect the world’s largest system of surface fresh water. Governor Whitmer of Michigan serves as the Chair, and Governor DeWine of Ohio serves as the Vice-Chair.

GSGP manages a diverse portfolio of projects focusing on economic development and environmental protection. For more information on our nine guiding priorities, please visit [Overview Great Lakes Governors and Premiers \(gsgp.org\)](https://www.gsgp.org).

For many years, our region has boasted the third largest regional economy in the world and a world-class environment. Beyond this, GSGP seeks to more effectively communicate about our region’s “blue economy” where our waters are being used to drive recreation, green energy production, other economic activity, and an exceptional quality of life in order to attract investment and population.

GSGP is therefore seeking a communications consultant or communication consulting firm to develop a strategic communications plan focusing on advancing the region’s “blue economy” (i.e., maritime, clean water technology/innovation, clean energy/water nexus, clean energy). The ultimate goal of the plan is to bring in additional investment in the region, from tourism, to business, to people moving to the area. The near-term goal will be to align messaging across the varied governors and premiers, so that as they make their pitches about their state or province, they are speaking with the same language on the regional blue economy. Ultimately, the plan will be used both by GSGP as a group, but as individual states and provinces as well. The communications plan should also provide a springboard for additional ideas and communications activities we GSGP may want to explore further based on how this initial plan goes.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

Contract duration: June 1, 2024 – July 31, 2024

The contract will be for US\$25,000. This amount represents all monies to be paid for services. As needed, GSGP will separately pay any travel costs subject to prior approval by GSGP’s Executive Director.

SCOPE OF SERVICES:

The selected consultant or firm will be responsible for developing a strategic communications plan including:

- Basic key messaging and talking points to reach the different audiences (business, tourism, etc.)
- Helpful regional stats to back up the messaging.
- Basic phrases and key images that can accompany and underscore the messaging, ideally supported by polling
- A few example products (a script for a TV ad, website language, draft remarks for a Gov or Premier to include in a speech on the topic)
- Suggested additional actions/products that could be further developed to support the plan.

QUALIFICATIONS:

GSGP is seeking an individual or firm with the following:

- Minimum 10 years of experience in communications or marketing.
- Experience with serving government customers.
- Familiarity with the Great Lakes St. Lawrence region and its economic and political environment.
- All work will be done in English. Additional language skills in French would be advantageous.

ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL:

Submissions must include:

- Description of you/your business including:
 - General overview including years in business;
 - Number of full and part-time employees and consultants/contract employees by functional area (if not a solo practitioner); and,
 - Contact person for this RFP including mailing address, phone, and email.
- Overview of individual/organizational capabilities as they relate to the development of the strategic communications plan.
- Examples of related work. Outline the key goals, objectives, and outcomes. If submitting as a firm, indicate who from your organization was responsible for the project.
- Resumes for all individuals who would be working on the project. If submitting as a firm, clearly identify the person who will have primary responsibility for managing the project and the person who will be the primary day-to-day contact for the project.
- Workplan for completing the project, including any steps to be undertaken as part of its development, and how you would envision engaging the GSGP/governors/premiers along the way. Timeframes for completion of each step must also be included.

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS:

Proposals, excluding any resumes, should be no more than 10 pages including supporting exhibits. Materials exceeding this limit will not be considered. **All proposals must be submitted by email to gsgp@gsgp.org by May 15, 2024.**

Proposals will be evaluated based upon:

- Demonstrated ability to perform all required services;
- Relevant experience;
- Demonstrated results; and,
- Overall quality of the submission.

GSGP will conduct virtual interviews with finalists during the week of May 20 and notify the successful candidate or firm during the week of May 27. Work under contract will begin on June 1.

No phone or email inquiries during the application or selection process.