



Request For Proposal for Public Relations Services 2016-2018

This is a request for a public relations proposal for San Mateo County Exposition and Fair Association, hereinafter referred to as the San Mateo County Fair scheduled to be held on June 11-19, 2016, June 10-18, 2017, and June 9-17, 2018.

The San Mateo County Fair's branding is "Where Tradition meets Innovation". The Fair continues to move towards establishing a strong STEM and DIY educational presence. Staff creates interactive events and displays within the Fair that represent this theme and the communities of San Mateo County. The Fair currently contracts with an Advertising and Marketing Company, "Unique Imaging, Inc." that produces the Fair's graphics and coordinates the marketing and advertising programs.

The Public Relations Contractor will work closely with Unique Imaging staff to leverage optimum press coverage. Public Relations coverage for the Fair typically starts in early March with occasional press releases done in preceding months and increasing coverage leading up to and during the Fair and one or two post Fair press releases. Occasionally the San Mateo Event Center may request a press release for their year round activities. If such requests arise, Contractor will be provided information for the preparation a press release and paid on an hourly basis.

The San Mateo County Fair celebrated its 80th anniversary in June 2014, is a long-standing community event. The Fair consists of several components, such as competitive exhibit entries and displays, carnival rides and games, commercial exhibits, entertainment (both national acts and community-based acts), and food. The Fair runs annually for 9 days in June.

The proposal should incorporate the development of a public relations plan and the following activities: media relations, relationship building with appropriate centers of influence, and community relations activities that support overall marketing messages for the San Mateo County Fair. This proposal encompasses opportunities for the San Mateo County Fair in years 2016-2018.

We anticipate these activities would include the following:

- Arranging local media coverage to include interviews and appearances prior to and during the Fair. This does require onsite staffing during the nine days of the event.
- Prepare with the San Mateo County Fair staff, electronic press packets
- Identifying possibilities for speaking engagements and appearances
- Identifying additional public relations opportunities within the designated budget
- Preparing a post-Fair report of all public relations activities
- Prepare and release occasional San Mateo County Event Center Press Releases related to year-round activities, to be billed at an hourly rate in addition to “Fair PR” services requested

All proposals will be evaluated on:

- Demonstrated expertise in and understanding of Festival, Special Event, and Fair Industries
- Understanding of and ability to meet our goals and objectives.
- Firm and personnel qualifications and experience with weight given to the experience of the account team.
- The ability of proposal to be executed within budget.

The contents of the proposal shall be as follows:

i. Proposed Public Relations Methodology

1. Description of the proposed Public Relations campaign for the 2016 San Mateo County Fair, Recommended key messages, primary program elements, and evaluation criteria
2. Brief case histories that illustrate ability and experience in [name desired area/s]
3. List of current and former clients in [name area/s] or related fields for whom you have worked in a similar vein, including independent contractors
4. Examples of special promotions for a large festival or County Fair
5. Examples of uses of social media and demonstrated contacts with Bay Area media outlets.
6. A minimum of Three References from current or past clients.

Personnel

1. Listing of principle owners of the company.
2. Primary contact for the contract, names of additional staff utilized for completion of the contract and professional experience of all of the above.
3. Dependability.
4. Willingness to work and cooperate with Fair staff, other contractors and/or their representative.
5. If any portion of the proposal is sub-contracted, all information of contractor and personnel must be included.

ii. Experience and Qualifications

1. Performance history under similar or relevant conditions, including recent history at other festivals, fairs, and other events.
2. Letters of Recommendation.
3. List three contracts under which you will be providing advertising and marketing services in 2015 and 2016. Do any contracts have conflicting dates with the San Mateo County Fair Dates?
4. Describe your business philosophy and why your company is interested in fulfilling this contract.
5. Demonstrated ability to comply with insurance and workers' compensation coverage requirements.

iii. Cost

The proposal should be based on a yearly budget of approximately \$30,000 for fees and expenses.

1. Cost breakdown for services contained in the proposal, with an additional hourly rate for San Mateo Event Center Press Releases requested on an as needed basis.
2. No agency commission will be paid, and any ad purchases.

3. List of proposed team members, including biographies, billing rates and level of participation in the account. Explanation of PR firm's billing procedures including rates, mark-ups, etc.

A. Interview

Each proposer submitting a written proposal will be required to give an oral interview regarding the content of their proposals, such as company history and their proposed 2016 Public Relations Campaign Outline.

Interviews will be scheduled **February 10, 2016**. It is anticipated that each interview will last approximately 45 minutes. Specific interview needs, such as screens, projectors, etc. will be taken during scheduling. Competing proposers will not be allowed to sit in on the interviews of other proposers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

This RFP does not commit the San Mateo County Expositions & Fair Association to award a contract or pay costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. The Association reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with qualified applicants the restructuring of the proposal, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP process if the Association deems it is in its best interest to do so. This RFP will not be construed to be a low bid process. The contract, if awarded, will be negotiated with the proposer who can best meet the Associations needs as identified in this RFP.

It is in the proposer's best interest to submit a complete and accurate proposal. Where documentation or response is incomplete or silent, it will be assumed that the proposal is deficient. Further, it is in the proposer's best interest to write a proposal that meets the stated requirements contained in this RFP. While applicants may provide alternatives to the requirements for consideration, failure to comply with all minimum requirements described within the RFP may disqualify proposals. The Association reserves the right to waive any RFP requirements if it deems it to be in the best interest of the Association.

No agreement shall be executed with any subcontractor to perform any services set forth in this agreement unless first receiving Association's written approval. No approval under this section shall constitute a continuing approval for subcontracting the same or any other services unless the approval specifically states that it is a continuing approval.

The California Public Records Act, Government Code Section 6250, provides that access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business is a fundamental and necessary right of every person in the state. Public records are defined as any writing relating to the conduct of the public's business and are open to inspection during normal business hours. There are specific exceptions to the Public Record Act.

In the event the Association receives a request for inspection of any proposal submitted pursuant to this RFP, it is the responsibility of the organization whose proposal has been requested to assert any right to confidentiality that may exist.

The Association will not make that assertion on behalf of the proposer. Without a judicial determination that the documents are exempt from disclosure, they will be subject to inspection. Due to the potential proprietary information to be provided, proposals will not be considered public record until after a decision has been made by the Board of Directors.

The San Mateo County Fair will enter into a three-year Contract with the successful Proposer.

Submission of a proposal constitutes a complete waiver of any claims whatsoever against the San Mateo County Event Center, and/or its agents, officers or employees, that the Association has violated a proposer's right to privacy, disclosed trade secrets or caused any damage by allowing the proposal to be inspected.

RFP Schedule

Release of RFP – January 21, 2016

Proposers' Question Deadline – February 5, 2016

Proposal Due Date – February 8, 2016 no later than 5:00 p.m.

Interview with selected Proposers – February 10, 2016 10 am to 3pm – Time slots will be made available upon request.

Evaluate Interviews – February 10, 2016

Notification of Proposal Selection Status – February 15, 2016

Recommendation of Contract to the Board of Directors – February 17, 2016

* All questions from proposers must be submitted in writing via email to:

Attn: Dana Stoehr, email address: danastoehr@smeventcenter.com

Responses to all written questions will be in writing to all recipients of the Public Relations Services RFP.

Submission & Receipt of Proposals

Three (3) copies of the typed, sealed proposal must be received by the San Mateo County Event Center at the following address no later than, 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 12, 2016. The San Mateo County Event Center will not be responsible for any late mail deliveries.

Please direct proposals to: Dana Stoehr, COO
2495 S. Delaware Street
San Mateo, CA 94403

Additional information about the Fair can be obtained at www.sanmateofair.com