Brand/Marketing RFP

Topline
The Boston Green Ribbon Commission seeks branding, marketing, planning, and execution assistance with the pilot phase of a multi-institution, Boston-based campaign that engages cultural organizations with climate programming under a single brand in 2020.

Summary
The Boston Green Ribbon Commission’s Cultural Institutions Working Group is launching a campaign of climate programming supported by forty-plus cultural institutions in Boston. Members of the group vary widely in size and mission: the unifying factor is a desire to use their ability to inform, educate, and help develop future vision for climate action in Boston, consistent with the City of Boston Climate Action Plan. Leaders include top marketing executives, division heads, and CEOs from the Museum of Fine Arts, the New England Aquarium, the Museum of Science, the Boston Red Sox, the Boston Children’s Museum, the City of Boston, and other well-known organizations and institutions iconic to Boston with broad attendance.

Client: Boston Green Ribbon Commission (fiscal agent is Innovation Network for Communities, a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization incorporated in New Hampshire).

Objective: Create and execute on a unifying brand, website, activation program, communications strategy, and celebratory event for a successful six-month pilot phase of the campaign, from April 22nd through mid-November.

Timeframe:
Jan – March: Development
April: Kick-off event
April – October: Program implementation and management
October/November: Celebratory event

Deliverables:
1. Brand, with usage guide and collateral, standardized descriptive language, tag lines, etc. that will enable marketing staff at a variety of institutions to easily implement the program.
2. Website to serve both consumers and institutional participants.
3. Detailed activation program, including calendar, promotional efforts, marketing channels, signage, and awareness-building activities.
4. Communications plan that will drive coverage in all media, including a social media strategy.
5. Event planning and implementation for an end-of-project celebration targeted for the first half of November 2020.

1. Background

Green Ribbon Commission
The mission of the Boston Green Ribbon Commission (GRC) is to convene leaders from Boston’s key sectors to support the outcomes of the City’s Climate Action Plan. Its goal is to help Boston become climate resilient and carbon free, while showing other cities how that can be done through cutting edge research, planning, modeling, strategy development, and execution. The GRC is organized around sector-based working groups: health care, higher education, cultural institutions, and commercial real estate.

Cultural Institutions Working Group
The mission of the Green Ribbon Commission Cultural Institutions Working Group is to help Boston’s cultural institutions drive awareness and action on climate issues on behalf of individual cultural organizations, the sector as a whole, the City, and public audiences.

One of the main activities of the Cultural Institutions Working Group is to foster and support cultural programming that brings aspects of climate change into new kinds of awareness among institutions, creators, and audiences, as well as to support the development of programs at individual organizations and explore the potential for collective or coordinated city-wide programming.

Boston’s museums, theaters, concert halls, zoos, greenways, and sports arenas need help preparing for the climate of the future (wetter, saltier, hotter) -- especially those with collections and buildings -- and they need strategies for transitioning to carbon-free energy use in the coming years. Moreover, because of their unique “line of business,” the cultural institutions have much to contribute in terms of communication, outreach, thought provoking programming, and the ability to reach people in non-technical ways and through alternative neural pathways. These institutions have the potential to influence our perceptions of shared challenges, expand our understanding of complex issues, and reach very large audiences. After two years of organizing, the Cultural Institutions Working Group is now well underway, with more than 40 participating institutions.

2. Project Goals and Scope of Services

Goals
To amplify awareness of climate change in Boston – and to create political and financial support for action by City and State leaders – the cultural institutions are undertaking a campaign of joint programming, loosely coordinated across many participating institutions. The pilot phase will kick off with the opening game of Red Sox season in the spring and culminate in a significant event in the late fall (TBD). If successful, the campaign could be continued or repeated, especially considering that the time frame for climate work in the City of Boston extends to 2050.

A successful campaign will:
- Attract attention in the City through the collective impact of simultaneous programming.
- Receive substantial, relevant, and positive coverage in the media.
- Bring new audiences to participating institutions; surprise traditional audiences.
Strengths going in include:

- The group is organized and enthusiastic.
- Four large institutions have committed to “anchoring” the pilot: Boston Red Sox, Museum of Science, New England Aquarium, and Museum of Fine Arts.
- Participants will amplify the campaign programs and messages with their own marketing resources.
- The City of Boston (Mayor, Arts & Culture, Environment) is engaged and supportive.
- The cultural sector is naturally creative, seeking partnerships, interdisciplinary thinking, and relevance.
- The participants represent an intriguing (and media-worthy) cross-disciplinary mix of arts, science, sports, history, and design.

Note: The Scope of Work outlined below does not anticipate the development of specific marketing plans per institution. Rather, the deliverables should create a single framework that participating institutions can plug into and incorporate (themselves) into their own marketing and media agendas.

**Scope of Work (deliverables listed in order of importance)**

1. **Brand.** Creation of a brand (or leveraging of an existing brand) that can be used by all members of the Cultural Institutions Working Group that choose to participate in the campaign, as well as by the City of Boston. The brand should capture the point of the campaign, signify the institution’s participation without interfering in other, existing branding, and specifically call attention to the institution’s programming related to climate change. “Programming” is defined as any programmatic offering by a member organization, including but not limited to; exhibitions, installations, festivals, lectures, tours, performances, and special events.

By creating a brand that can be applied across Cultural Institutions Working Group member institutions, the GRC seeks to:

- Provide visitors and audiences with a visual prompt that suggests unity of mission across the cultural institutions of Boston and alignment with city initiatives when it comes to issues related to climate change, resilience and energy use.
- Promote awareness and action on the part of visitors and audiences.
- Encourage member institutions and their affiliates to develop new programming related to climate change.
- Highlight the responsibility/opportunity for envisioning positive change in the City.

The development of the brand is expected to involve:

- Close consultation with GRC staff, plus absorption of stakeholder feedback from Brand/Marketing officers of key participating organizations, Working Group leadership, and the City
- Analysis of existing brands in use by the GRC and member institutions
- Informal user testing and feedback

**Deliverable:** Logo/Graphic Identity, Usage Guide, Collateral across multiple applications, Descriptive language, Tag lines, etc. (Please note

2. **Website.** The pilot will require a fairly simple but professional and attractive website where public audiences can go to understand more about the overall campaign, as well as the events and activities that will occur during the six month period. It would be desirable for the website to also support the
marketing and logistical needs of the participating organizations, with joint calendaring, downloadable resources, and key information.

3. **Detailed activation program plan and execution support.** Hands-on planning and implementation of campaign elements, including calendaring, promotional efforts, marketing channels, signage/advertising, and awareness-building activities.

4. **Communications plan.** Drive coverage in all media, including a social media strategy; creation of content materials; outreach to reporters, placement, etc.

5. **Event design, planning, and implementation.** All aspects of support (including fund raising or sponsorship) for an end-of-project celebration targeted for the first half of November 2020. (This is a fairly unformed concept open to practical and creative input.)

### 3. Selection Schedule
The Request for Proposal timeline is as follows:
- Request for RFI: January 21, 2020
- Statements of intent to propose: by January 27
- RFP submission deadline February 3
- Notification by February 10

### 4. Time and Place of Submission of Proposals
The RFP will be posted to the GRC website at [www.greenribboncommission.org](http://www.greenribboncommission.org) and can be downloaded directly as of January 21.

Respondents to this RFP must send a PDF via email, and may submit supplemental material in any format, to amy@greenribboncommission.org by February 3, 2020.

### 5. Timeline
With project kickoff less than three months away, time is of the essence. While certain aspects of the work can be carried out post kick-off, it is essential to have a brand and website by early April.

### 6. Elements of Proposal
The submission must, at a minimum, include the following elements. Brevity is appreciated:

- Description of the firm that includes a general overview, names and credentials of the team and number of full time employees.
- A (maximum) one page narrative outlining the firm’s strengths and distinguishing skills or capabilities as they might relate to the Green Ribbon Commission Cultural Institutions Working Group.
- A representative selection of logos, social media ads, direct response material, collateral, and website development created for current and past clients.
- A broad strokes work plan that outlines critical tasks and milestone deadlines, including a stated willingness to start immediately and work quickly.
- Draft budget, with the five deliverables broken out.
Note: As a nonprofit consortium of nonprofits, the GRC is budget-constrained. We will place value on proposals that offer pro-bono services in full or in part; offer preferential non-profit rates; and/or present creative but easily implementable ideas for leveraging the relationships and existing marketing activities built into some of the larger institutions that are participating in the project.

The ideal partner will be a single firm with comprehensive services that is interested in working on the entire campaign and covering all deliverables on a pro bono basis. That said, bidders should feel free to bid on specific sections of the work. Similarly, bidders may specify which elements they can offer pro bono, even if they cannot support the entire project at no cost. Priority attention will be given to Deliverables 1 and 2.

7. Evaluation Criteria

The successful respondent will:

- Have been continuously operating as an agency for a minimum of 24 months and possess full-service, in-house capabilities for marketing, brand development, and creative services.
- Possess the necessary education, experience, knowledge, skills and qualifications as a firm and as individuals who will be available to provide these services.
- Be competitive in their cost of services.
- Be able to demonstrate sensitivity to the diversity of the Cultural Institutions Working Group and the unique work that members do, have experience working in and with the cultural sector, have a proven ability to work successfully with a diverse range of stakeholders, and be devoted to design and communications excellence.
- Understand climate, energy, and resilience issues generally and be familiar with the City of Boston’s Climate Action Plan.

8. Budget

See notes in Section 6 of this RFP.

9. Additional Information

See Y/OUR Campaign Backgrounder (note that this three-pager was written under a draft brand name; please read for content only).

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