

MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

720 Westview Drive
Atlanta, Georgia 30310-1495

**MSM Procurement Services
404-752-8459**

December 2021



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

For

National COVID-19 Resiliency Network
Integrated Marketing and Communications

For

MOREHOUSE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

THIS IS NOT AN OFFER TO PURCHASE

Proposal Must Be Received No Later Than:
January 14, 2022

Request for Proposals

**National COVID-19 Resiliency Network
Integrated Marketing Communications
National Center for Primary Care
Morehouse School of Medicine
Atlanta, Georgia**

Project Description

The objective of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified sources to establish a contract for the development and implementation of integrated marketing communications for the National COVID-19 Resiliency Network inclusive of:

- Website Content Development
- E-Newsletter Content and Design
- Email Campaign Content and Design
- Social Media Content and Design
- Print Collateral Design (Factsheets, Infographics, Palm Cards, Reports)
- Virtual Event Planning and Promotions
- Webinars/Trainings Planning and Promotions
- Paid Ad Management/Media Buys
- Podcast Planning and Promotions
- Video Planning and Promotions

Content across these channels above will be focused on the following topics: COVID-19 Vaccines; COVID-19 Boosters; COVID-19 Pandemic Resilience and Recovery Strategies.

Our request is to have each of these deliverables completed in a way that allows for it to be taken separately or collectively. We own the right to either accept part(s) of your proposal or the entire proposal; as we see fit. The National COVID-19 Resiliency Network within the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse School of Medicine seek to identify an integrated marketing and communications agency that displays the innovative and strategic methods of digital branding reflective of an institution of our kind. The selected agency must focus on:

- **Digital Innovation**
- **Multicultural Health Marketing/Communication**
- **User-centered Design**
- **Principles of Persuasion**
- **Health Literacy**
- **Plain Language**

Contractors are strongly encouraged to review the following websites for additional information about the NCRN program (www.msm.edu/ncrn) and NCPC (www.msm.edu/ncpc). These websites will be the digital home of this initiative.

Introduction

The MSM National Center for Primary Care (NCPC) serves as a national resource for front-line practitioners, educators, researchers, and policy makers who impact our primary healthcare system. NCPC's vision is to achieve equitable and optimal healthcare through primary care for all, with a mission to strengthen the primary care system through education, research and training to improve health outcomes while advancing and sustaining health equity.

MSM's NCPC created the National COVID-19 Resiliency Network (NCRN) as part of the National Infrastructure for Mitigating the Impact of COVID-19 within Racial and Ethnic Minority Communities (NIMIC) Initiative, a three-year cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department to Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health and MSM. Our joint initiative is to work with community-based organizations across the nation to deliver education, information and resources to help fight the pandemic. (Grant # 1 CPIMP201187-01-00).

NCRN focuses on reaching the following communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 through leveraging its network of partners who engage in grassroots outreach, in combination with traditional and mass media strategies:

- Asian Americans
- Hispanics/Latinos*
- Blacks/African Americans*
- Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders
- American Indians/Alaska Natives*
- Individuals with Disabilities*
- Individuals who are Justice System Involved*
- Migrant/Agricultural Farmworkers*
- Immigrant/Refugee Communities
- Underserved Rural Communities

*Indicates formative research (focus groups and interviews) with these communities was conducted in 2021.

The NCPC is a research center within Morehouse School of Medicine ("MSM" or the "School of Medicine"), which is located in Atlanta, Ga., was founded in 1975 as the Medical Education Program at Morehouse College. In 1981, MSM became an independently chartered institution. MSM is among the nation's leading educators of primary care physicians and was recently recognized as the top institution among U.S. medical schools for our social mission. Our faculty and alumni are noted in their fields for excellence in teaching, research and public policy. MSM is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education, Council on Education for Public Health, Liaison Committee on Medical Education and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. For more information about Morehouse School of Medicine, please visit www.msm.edu.

MSM Vision & Mission

Morehouse School of Medicine exist to:

- Improve the health and well-being of individuals and communities
- Increase the diversity of the health professional and scientific workforce

- Address primary health care through programs in education, research, and service
With emphasis on people of color and the underserved urban and rural populations in Georgia, the nation, and the world.

TARGET DATES

RFP Release Date	December 13, 2021
Conference Call	December 15, 2021 at 9:00 AM EST
Deadline for Questions	December 22, 2021 at 5:00 PM EST
Response to Questions	December 27, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST
RFP Responses Due	January 14, 2022 at 5:00 PM EST
Interviews/Firm Presentations	TBA – if necessary
Award Decision	January 21, 2022 4:00 PM EST

***All time and dates are subject to change

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Respondents will provide an electronic copy of the proposal to MSM NCRN at ncrn@msm.edu , copying p2p@msm.edu.

Proposals will be received by MSM’s NCRN at the email address noted above and by the time noted in the Schedule section. Proposals time stamped after the deadline will not be accepted. All materials submitted in response to this RFP become the property of Morehouse School of Medicine and may become a part of any resulting contract. In addition, all proposals become public record.

Morehouse School of Medicine is not responsible for any proposal preparation expenses, submission costs, or any expenses incurred in negotiations or site visits. The proposal constitutes an offer by the vendor that shall remain open for a period of 90 days from the deadline for submitting proposals.

- A. **Proposal Errors.** No proposal shall be altered or amended after the specified time for opening the proposals. After opening, a vendor will be permitted to withdraw a proposal only where there is obvious clerical error in the proposal such as a misplaced decimal point, or where enforcement of the proposal would impose unconscionable hardship due to an error in the proposal resulting in a quotation substantially below the other proposals received. Withdrawals will be considered only upon written request from the vendor.
- B. **Pre-Proposal Conference Call.** A voluntary conference will be at 9:00AM December 15, 2022 to answer any questions about the proposals. Email: p2p@msm.edu and become a vendor of record with the enclosed form. The one-hour call will clarify any components of RFP and information about the National COVID-19 Resiliency Network (NCRN) at Morehouse School of Medicine. No more than two representatives from each firm may attend the conference call. A single company contact must be identified for the purpose of all communications. Information for the call is the following:

NCRN Integrated Marketing and Communications Conference Call
Wednesday, December 15, 2021 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM EST

Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

Zoom: <https://msm-edu.zoom.us/j/5709142526>

Meeting ID: 570 914 2526

You can also dial in using your phone.

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,5709142526# US (Chicago)

+19292056099,,5709142526# US (New York)

- A. **Questions and Inquiries.** All questions must be submitted in writing to ncrn@msm.edu, copying p2p@msm.edu and bbethea@msm.edu, before the deadline noted in the Schedule section.
- B. **Addendum.** MSM reserves the right to issue addenda to the RFP at any time as a result of questions, changes in schedule, or other matters. MSM also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP
- C. **Interviews.** An oral presentation or site visit may be required after review of written proposals. Each firm should be prepared to discuss and substantiate any of the areas of the proposal it has submitted, its own qualifications for the services required, and any other area of interest relative to this proposal. However, MSM reserves the right to award a contract on the basis of initial proposals received, without interviews.

RESPONSE FORMAT

Each response must be in the following format or MSM will deem the response to be non-responsive.

- A. **Cover Letter.** Letter summarizing response signed by an authorized representative of the firm.
- B. **Table of Contents**

Maximum 10-page RFP Documents

includes:RFP Cover Page

Proposal Executive Summary

10-page Integrated

Marketing Communications

Proposal

Relevant Experience

Provide a list and description of representative projects completed by your firm that would assist the Selection Committee’s consideration of the firm’s experience. While the number of projects presented is within your sole discretion, the list should focus on successful projects of comparable scope and complexity sought by this solicitation. The list of representative projects shall include the following specific information:

- A. Project Name and Location.
- B. Name and Address of Owner/Client.
- C. Scope of Services.

Staff and Company Qualifications –

Provide a brief history of the prime firm and consulting firms proposed for the project. Provide a list of proposed Project team members along with an organizational chart. Individual resumes are to be included demonstrating professional qualifications, experience and training. Provide a brief outline of each individual’s anticipated duties relative to this Project, as well as their availability and commitment to this Project (These pages do not count against the RFP limits).

References

References will be selected for interview by MSM from the contact information submitted with the list of representative projects.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each of the following criteria will be evaluated and weighted relative to the indicated multipliers.

CRITERIA	WEIGHT
Methodology and Approach, including Timeline	25%
Relevant Experience	25%
Staff and Company Qualifications	20%
Fee for Services	20%
References	<u>10%</u>
Total	<u>100%</u>

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Commitment of the Institution

Morehouse School of Medicine reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time and for any reason. Receipt of proposal materials by MSM or submission of a proposal to MSM confers no rights upon the proposer nor obligates the University in any manner.

A contract, based on this RFP, may or may not be awarded. Any contract resulting in an award from this RFP is invalid until properly executed by MSM and approved by the MSM Contract Review Committee.

Issuing Office

This RFP is being issued by:

**Morehouse School of Medicine
Procurement Services
720 Westview Drive, S.W.
Harris Building Suite 142
Atlanta, GA 30310-1495
Primary Point of Contact(s):
bbethea@msm.edu
ncrn@msm.edu**

Inquiries

Contact with MSM agents for information specific to bidding procedures and/or regulations shall be limited to the MSM Procurement Services. All technical inquiries as well as questions regarding bidding procedures must be made in writing to the MSM Procurement Services. Inquiries should be submitted to the attention of the MSM's NCRN email: ncrn@msm.edu, copying procurement services email: p2p@msm.edu.

Oral Commitments

Potential proposers should clearly understand that any verbal representations made or assumed to be made during any oral discussions held between representatives of potential proposers and any MSM personnel are not binding on MSM unless confirmed, in writing, by the MSM Procurement Services.

Beginning of Work

The successful Firm must not commence any billable work until a valid contract has been executed and filed with the MSM Contract Review Committee.

Conflict of Interest

No employee of MSM who exercises any functions or responsibilities in the review or approval of the undertaking or carrying out of the contract shall, prior to the completion of the contract, voluntarily acquire any personal interest, direct or indirect, in this contract or proposed contract.

The Firm covenants that it presently has no interest and shall not acquire any interest, direct or indirect, which would conflict in any manner or degree with the performance of its services hereunder. The Firm further covenants that in the performance of the contract no person having any such known interests shall be employed.

Restrictions on Communications with MSM Staff

From the advertisement date of the RFP and until a Firm is selected and selection is finally approved, offerors are not allowed to communicate in matters concerning the RFP with any MSM staff except the Department POC and MSM Purchasing Department. For violation of this provision, MSM shall reserve the right to reject the proposal.

In an effort to provide equal treatment to all offerors, questions must be submitted in writing no later than **December 22, 2021 @ 5:00PM EST** by email to the attention of the MSM NCRN at ncrn@msm.edu, copying Procurement Services, email p2p@msm.edu. Answers to all questions will be published as Addenda to the RFP.

RFP Addenda

Addenda of this RFP may be necessary prior to the closing date and will be furnished by email notification to all prospective offerors. Failure to acknowledge receipt of addenda in accordance with the instructions contained in the addendum may result in the proposal not being considered. Addenda notification will be sent to all organizations requesting copies of the RFP.

Cost of Preparing Proposal

Costs for developing the proposals are solely the responsibility of the offerors. MSM will provide no reimbursement for such costs. Any costs associated with any oral presentations to MSM will be the responsibility of the Offeror and will in no way be billable to MSM.

Disposition of Proposals

All proposals become the property of MSM. The successful proposal will be incorporated into the resulting contract by reference.

Proposal Addenda and Rules for Withdrawal

Prior to the date specified for receipt of offers, a submitted proposal may be withdrawn by submitting a signed written request for its withdrawal to the MSM Purchasing Office.

Unless requested by MSM, the institution will not accept any addenda, revisions, or alterations to proposals after the proposal due date.

Any submitted proposals shall remain a valid proposal for six months after the proposal due date.

Proposal Submission Requirements

One electronic copy of the proposal must be received by **January 14, 2022**, no later than **5:00 p.m.** Eastern time. Any proposal received after this date and time shall be rejected and returned. Proposals are to be sent to **ncrn@msm.edu**, [copying p2p@msm.edu](mailto:copying_p2p@msm.edu)

Subject line should contain the following: MSM NCRN Integrated Marketing and Communications.

Method of Award

Morehouse School of Medicine will negotiate a contract with the proposal that receives the highest number of evaluation points. Should the parties fail to reach an acceptable contract in the opinion of MSM, MSM may, at its sole option, declare that the institution is unable to complete a contract with the highest-ranking proposal and begin negotiations with the second highest-ranking proposal, and so on until a contract is negotiated.

Appendix.

Appendix A. Task Areas

The period of performance for this work is February 1 – June 30th, 2022.

Task 1. Website Content Development

- Develop web copy for updates to Homepage, landing pages and detail pages for www.msm.edu/ncrn approximately once per quarter.
- Develop web copy for summaries and tagging of resource submissions from partners and internal team members to publish approximately 5-10 new resources per week.
- Monitoring and drafting of 3-4 news summaries each month, specific to new guidelines released from CDC, NIH, and FDA related to COVID-19 vaccines, boosters, and variants.

Task 2. Paid Ad Management/Media Buys

- Optimize successful social media content and assets as social ads to drive traffic to NCRN website.
- Plan, develop and secure 5-7 media buys for general market and national ethnic broadcast (TV, radio, and/or music streaming platform) ads to drive traffic to NCRN website.
- Develop 2-4 digital ads (Google search, YouTube, Over-the-Top ads, etc.) to drive traffic to NCRN website)

Task 3. Social Media Content and Design

- Co-develop social media content strategy for NCRN accounts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn, etc.)
- Develop 4 social media calendars for March, April, May and June 2022, averaging 4-5 posts per week on each platform.
- Develop 20 social media design assets optimized for use across posts on NCRN’s social media platforms.
- Develop 5 social media assets focused on observation months to be used across posts on NCRN’s social media platforms.

Task 4. Develop Content and Design for Downloadable/Sharable Print Materials

- Develop a message strategy for COVID-19 Vaccine and Booster campaign(s), that can be adapted and translated for multiple audiences using existing formative research
- Develop campaign materials inclusive, but not limited to the following for community-based organizations to disseminate to members in their community disproportionately impacted by COVID-19:
 - Factsheets
 - Posters
 - Palm Cards
 - Infographics
 - Gifs
 - Motion Graphic Videos

Task 5. eNewsletter Content Development

- Develop content for a monthly e-newsletter distributed through Salesforce Marketing Cloud.

- Develop design/layout for a monthly e-newsletter within existing Salesforce Marketing Cloud template.

Task 6. Email Campaign Content and Design

- Co-develop email campaign content strategy
- Develop content for ~15 weekly email blasts to be disseminated through Salesforce Marketing Cloud
- Develop 5-7 design assets (banners, images, gifs, etc.) for email blasts to be disseminated through Salesforce Marketing Cloud

Task 7. Video Planning and Production

- Co-develop a motion graphic video strategy for NCRN
- Develop 1 .60 sec – 2min. video highlighting the accomplishments of NCRN to date.
- Develop a .30 sec. video series of 3-5 partner promotion videos highlighting success stories for COVID-19 response.
- Develop 3-5 .30 - .60 sec. educational videos on COVID-19 topics.

Task 8. Event Planning and Promotions (Virtual)

- Co-develop event creative briefs, promotional materials (save the date, marketing webpage banners, email invitations, social assets, etc.) for 2 virtual “Community Conversations” events on COVID-19 hot topics and 1 CommUNITY Exchange event.

Task 9. Podcast Planning

- Co-develop plan for podcast development focused on COVID-19 Resilience and Recovery

Appendix B. Questions & Answers (as of Dec. 17th, 2021)

- **Was the video conference call from 12/15 recorded, is it posted somewhere to be reviewed?**

Yes, the recording can be viewed here:

Meeting Recording: https://msm-edu.zoom.us/rec/share/nMOSE49_bNb85TkVpY44XHWarx6JFxMVr3_EYMCL5dj61Hpu8ZL_Cpk2LeMuWVdS.1ps8voEnUArBpL6P

Access Passcode: ?+6geu3S

- **Will the questions and responses from the conference call session be posted somewhere for review?**

Yes, they will be posted here in the Addendum of the RFP.

- **Can you clarify the deadline to submit questions?**
 - Page 4 says the deadline is 12/17 at 5 pm
 - Page 8 says the deadline is 12/22 at 5 pm

Yes, the deadline to submit questions is 12/22 at 5pm ET.

- **The RFP does not indicate the GEO target of your campaign, can you specify the geographical area? (i.e. Would this be for Atlanta Metro, State of Georgia...etc.)**

This is a national communications campaign. We would like to target geographic areas and various racial/ethnic groups across US counties that have the lowest vaccination rate. (See Data in Appendix C).

- **On page 6, under criteria, you state the Fee for Services. Are you asking for the fee to execute in addition to our recommended budget? Do these need to be broken out separately?**

Fee to execute services and advertising should be included in a total budget. Yes, please itemize the fee separate from the recommended budget allocated to media buys recommended for national reach.

- **Can you provide the campaign budget?**

Total budget for this effort (including fee for service and media ad buys) is a range between \$700K-\$850K.

- **On page 6, will Relevant Experience, Staff & Company Qualifications, References count against the RFP page limits?**

No, these sections will not count against the RFP page limits.

- **Please confirm that the current budget for this effort is \$850,000.**

The current budget for integrated marketing and communications between now and June 30th, 2022 (including fee for service, creative materials development, and media ad buys) is a range between \$700,000- \$850,000.

- **Is the Vaccine and Booster Campaign referenced under Task 4 something that is unique to that task or is it the broader campaign for all tasks?**

The Vaccine and Booster Campaign referenced under Task 4, is not unique to that task. Getting fully vaccinated is the focus of the broader campaign for Tasks 1-4 and Task 8. The Booster Campaign materials do not currently exist but when developed should have a relationship to existing campaign materials focused on full vaccination.

- **In Task 2, under “Plan, develop and secure 5-7 media buys for general market and national ethnic radio ads to drive traffic to NCRN website.” Please confirm if 5-7 media buys means radio buys in 5-7 different DMAs.**

5-7 media buys mean radio, tv, or music streaming platform ads for targeting 5-7 racial/ethnic groups.

- **Please confirm that the budget, and associated supported budget documentation, as well as the staffing plan and relevant experience is excluded from the 10-page proposal limit.**

The budget, and associated supported budget documentation, as well as the staffing plan and relevant experience are excluded from the 10-page limit.

- **Please confirm that the targeted audience(s) for the weekly email and monthly newsletter are the same. If not, please clarify.**

Weekly emails are primarily for NCRN partners who have a contract or MOU with NCRN.

The monthly newsletter is primarily for the broader network of community-based organizations (CBOs) who have subscribed to receive new information and resources from NCRN to help inform their community engagement efforts centered around COVID-19 response.

Once we grow our subscriber list segment of lay community members, ideally, they would receive emails and a newsletter tailored for them (different from the one for CBOs and NCRN partners).

- **Please confirm that the resulting award from this solicitation will be a Time and Materials (T&M) type contract.**

Yes, the resulting award will be a Time and Materials (T&M) contract.

- **Given the sensitive/proprietary nature of the information provided in the proposal submission (e.g., technical approach, staffing, pricing detail, etc.), please clarify what is placed in the public domain as referenced on page 4 of the solicitation.**

Only the names of companies who bid will be released in the public domain.

- **Could you let us know if you have a local preference or are you open to a Canadian agency that has done similar work with clients across North America?**

We do not have a local preference.

- **If a firm is an existing vendor of record, does the firm still need to complete the enclosed vendor registration form?**

No.

- **Regarding Task 3, will social media only include NCRN accounts or will content for MSM be integrated into this effort?**

It will only include NCRN accounts. When appropriate, MSM accounts may cross-promote NCRN content.

- Regarding Task 3, can you add more clarity on the definition of observation months?

National Health Observances (NHOs) are special days, weeks, or months dedicated to raising awareness about important health topics. Example observation months relevant to this work

include, but are not limited to: National Immunization Awareness Month, National Health Literacy Month, etc.

- Regarding Task 8, for the events, will the chosen firm be expected to provide support for and/or during the “live” virtual sessions, such as securing speakers or leading the event. Per the RFP, our understanding is that support constitutes co-developing briefs and promotional materials, but wanted to confirm.

No, the firm will not be expected to provide support for and/or during the “live” virtual sessions.

- Regarding Task 9, can you please elaborate on your vision for support around co-developing a plan for podcast development. For example, will the chosen firm be responsible for only strategy, including branding, subject matter recommendations, related advertising efforts. Or will the firm also be responsible for podcast production efforts, such as script creation or identifying/securing podcast speakers.

The firm will not be responsible for podcast production efforts, such as script creation or identifying/securing podcast speakers-- only strategy, including branding, episode content strategy, related advertising efforts, and promotional planning.

- Does Morehouse School of Medicine require a Firm Fixed Price (FFP) or Time and Materials (T&M) budget?

We prefer a Time and Materials (T&M) budget.

- Does Morehouse School of Medicine have a preferred format for the Fees for Services portion of the proposal?

No.

- On page 6 of the RFP under Relevant Experience, the RFP asks for "successful projects of comparable scope." Are offerors permitted to include current/ongoing projects?

Yes.

- On page 6 of the RFP under Relevant Experience, the RFP asks for names and addresses of owners/clients. Should offerors provide mailing addresses or email addresses?

Email addresses and phone numbers.

- How does Morehouse School of Medicine plan to contact references?

By email and/or phone.

- On page 11 of the RFP under Task 9, the RFP mentions co-developing a plan for podcast development. Can Morehouse School of Medicine clarify whether they expect to launch a podcast during this period of performance?

- Is Morehouse School of Medicine open to additional message or material testing?

We currently have a partner (University of South Florida) conducting neuromarketing testing of all campaign concepts. We do not intend to duplicate this effort.

- On pages 10 and 11 of the RFP under Tasks 3, 6, 7, 8, and 9, the RFP mentions co-developing products. Can Morehouse School of Medicine clarify whether co-development will be between the vendor and Morehouse School of Medicine or between the vendor and another vendor?

In most cases, co-development (referring to collaboration) occurs between the vendor and MSM's NCRN staff. In some cases, there may be collaboration with other partners who are sub-awardees.

Appendix C.

Please see the list of US counties in the lower quartile of vaccination rate ($\leq 44.5\%$) and upper quartile of proportion ($\geq 9.692\%$) for each of the following racial/ethnic groups provided in the RFP Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1oQy8Vswd-UbGXLD6vuF4cLbxCJkS1Cb?usp=sharing>

- Non-Hispanic Black/African American
- American Indian and Alaska Natives (AI/AN)
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders
- Asian Americans
- Hispanics/Latinx

The priority is to launch ads in the geographic areas where we have the greatest potential to have the greatest reach.

Formative Research reports on these community groups will be published on our website, and also shared with the selected firm: <https://bit.ly/NCRNPublications>.

