

Jul 21, 2023

Downtown Raleigh Alliance is accepting proposals from firms to provide creative services for the holiday season. Accordingly, we invite your firm to submit a proposal to us by July 20th. A description of the company, the services needed, and other pertinent information follows.

### **Background of Downtown Raleigh Alliance (DRA)**

DRA's mission is advancing the vitality of Downtown Raleigh for everyone. Downtown Raleigh has emerged as a vibrant center of activity that continues to welcome historic growth and investment. As a center of commerce and government, downtown is also home to a thriving creative culture with artists, musicians, innovative tech companies, award-winning chefs, and cutting-edge makers working to create the Downtown Raleigh experience.

The long-term strategy of the DRA is formulated by an all-volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of prominent civic, governmental, business and philanthropic leaders; while day-to-day affairs are executed by the DRA's President and staff.

Through this leadership structure, the DRA has established itself as one of Raleigh's most influential public-private partnerships.

### **DRA's Strategic Goals**

- Improve downtown economy through recruitment, pop-ups, financial support, research, marketing & promotions.
- Advocate to make Downtown a place for everyone that reflects evolving needs and interests of the community and lessons learned from the recent past.
- Make downtown an engaging place to live, work, and visit through safe activations that appeal to a wide variety of stakeholders.
- Improve and maintain the sense of safety and security in downtown through our Ambassador program, Social Services and work with RPD.
- Elevate and improve DRA's internal organization and processes through improved database, project management, communication, financial stewardship, and planning.

## **Project Overview**

The Holiday season in Downtown Raleigh is our biggest opportunity of the year to showcase the unique retail scene that you won't find anywhere else in the State of North Carolina. With the largest concentration of locally-owned retailers in the region, a walk score of 97, and unique experiences such as the Ice Skating rink and Illuminate Art Walk, downtown has a robust offering for consumers. But downtown Raleigh also faces unique challenges with public perceptions around paid parking, lack of national chains, and retail scattered across downtown instead of



DowntownRaleigh Alliance

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centered on one corridor. To amplify our competitive advantages and address these perceptions, we use three specific campaigns to buttress the holiday season and position downtown competitively.

- **Tree Lighting:** Raleigh Civic Ventures' (a subsidiary of DRA) sponsored, annual Christmas tree lighting event in November. This event brought more than 50% of its audience from 10 miles or further away and is broadcast live on ABC11, where it has won its time slot the past 4 years. This event is aimed at families with Santa Claus, live performances of holiday songs and the main event being the lighting of the Raleigh Christmas Tree with the Mayor and City Council. The event serves as the kickoff to the holiday season downtown and our marketing for the event both encourages attendance at the event by highlighting the program elements and also features local retail downtown as a way to tie the event to our storefront businesses.
- **Illuminate:** DRA's free, annual light art walk takes place every December. This event drew thousands of people to downtown Raleigh last year to visit over a dozen interactive light installations. The purpose of this month-long event is to draw visitors into the downtown core to patronize storefront businesses. Public art, made accessible to everyone, is a core pillar of the messaging, and the investment is intended to compete with area light shows that charge for admission. The success of this event is measured in foot traffic and the campaign leverages influencer marketing, social media marketing, and partnerships.
- **Holiday Hub:** our retail-focused digital campaign that showcases the unique experiences and products downtown retailers offer during the holiday season. The ideal positioning for this campaign would be products and services that you cannot find anywhere else, making your holiday season more of an experience than a grueling checklist of empty gift-buying.. This is the area of our holiday campaign that requires the most foundational work so that it can scale in the future. we expect an agency to provide the bulk of its ideation support here. Locally made NC products placed in a compatible ad spread is the target. [Amex's Small Business Saturday](#) campaign is a great example of national messaging opportunities that could be tailored to Downtown Raleigh retailers.

We're seeking an agency that can provide digital ad placement support, fill in creative needs—specifically where there is a dense volume of deliverables, and alleviate the strain on a small team.

## Project Goals

### Holiday Hub

Exceed a baseline of engagement from the previous Fiscal Year of Holiday Hub digital campaign impressions (Impressions: 234,571) and 37 of downtown businesses featured from mid-November through December 31.

### Tree Lighting

Attendance goal of 2,000+ people with an estimated 3,500 in attendance at 2022's event is the baseline metric provided to the sponsors. This is normally achieved through a boosted Facebook event and

organic amplification. However, this year, we would like to more closely tie the Tree Lighting event itself to the retailers downtown as a formal kick off to the shopping season.

### **Illuminate**

The average nightly visitor baseline for December 2022-January 2023 was 25,999 with a peak of 47,897 visitors on Saturday evenings. The total number of impressions the campaign received was 403,000. The goal is to exceed these numbers by 10-15%.

## **Scope of Work**

The scope of work for this project is follows:

- Deliver a spread of targeted digital advertising placement for all three sub campaigns of the overarching holiday season using DRA's demographic information
- Provide recommendations for best practices, assist in design, and implement placement of creative deliverables in digital ads for Holiday Hub, Tree Lighting, and Illuminate
  - 1080 x 1080 social media feed ads
  - 1080 x 1920 social media stories ads
  - Banner ads
  - Geofencing display
- Deliver spread of recommended print advertising placement and provide support in design to sizing specifications
- Provide recommendations and support and creative deliverables for Illuminate campaign including
  - Signage
  - Photography and videography

## **Evaluation of Proposals**

DRA will evaluate proposals on a qualitative and quantitative basis. In addition to cost considerations and products and services proposed, results of discussions with other clients, and the firm's completeness and timeliness in its response to us all will be considered. Qualified vendors with a permanent business address within the Downtown Raleigh Municipal Services District (MSD) shall receive a 2.5% bid discount. Additionally, qualified minority- and women-owned businesses with a permanent business address within the Downtown Raleigh MSD shall receive an additional 2.5% bid discount.

As previously mentioned, if you choose to respond to this request, please do so by July 21, 2023 at 4 pm, attention to Lauren Barnett, Director of Marketing and Communications, 333 Fayetteville, St, Suite 1150, Raleigh, NC 27601. Or via email to [laurenbarnett@downtownraleigh.org](mailto:laurenbarnett@downtownraleigh.org). If you have any questions or would like further clarification of any aspect of this request for bid, please contact Lauren Barnett by email.

## Submission Requirements

1. Provide an overview of your organization and detail your firm's experience in providing creative services, including a portfolio of past and current work.
2. Describe the firm's commitment to staff continuity to clients.
3. Identify the partner, manager assigned.
4. Describe how your firm will approach the project as a whole and manage the feedback process.
5. Set forth your fee proposal for the optimal package of services.
6. Provide names and contact information for three other similarly-sized clients.
7. Describe how and why your firm is different from other firms being considered, and why the selection of your firm as creative collaborator with DRA is the best decision we could make.

