

**America 250 Foundation National Semiquincentennial
Convention Master Planning Request For Proposal (“RFP”)**

RFP number: A250-2022-07-002

Date issued: July 21, 2022

Key dates:

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| RFP issue date | July 21, 2022 |
| Intent to respond date (if applicable) | August 2, 2022, 4:59pm ET |
| Questions due: | August 2, 2022, 4:59pm ET |
| Response to Questions: | August 5, 2022 |
| Proposal due date and time: | August 19, 2022, 4:59pm ET |



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1 Introduction

America 250 Foundation, Inc. (the “Foundation”) is requesting proposals from creative services firms to present their qualifications, experience, and conceptual approach to providing master planning for the National Semiquincentennial Convention, a civic convening and cultural festival scheduled for the summer of 2026. With virtual and in-person activations nationwide, there will be a particularly impactful civic convention and cultural festival in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

We seek creative thinkers and doers to work with our in-house team to envision a concept brief for an event that will be the zenith of A250 commemorations and celebrations.

Specifically, the Foundation is seeking services from the qualified firms for the following scope of work:

1. Creative Development and Direction
2. Operational Recommendations
3. Program Schedule

2 Background and Organization History

The U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (the “Commission”, together with the Foundation, “America250” or “A250”) was established by Congress to inspire Americans to participate in the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States. We’re charged with orchestrating the largest and most inclusive anniversary observance in our nation’s history.

The Foundation is the nonprofit created to support and execute the Commission’s mission. The Foundation works collaboratively with the Commission to provide a robust public-private partnership to bring the vision for America25 to life. The Foundation plans and executes the Commission’s vision and legislative charge.

3 Scope and Objectives:

The Foundation seeks a multidisciplinary team to develop a concept brief outlining plans for a National Semiquincentennial Convention (“NSC”). The outcome of this contract will be a concept brief that can be shared with Commissioners and other stakeholders. The end product should be visually dynamic, bringing to life a program concept that is bold, imaginative, meaningful, fully accessible, and inclusive. It should also align with our vision, objectives, and programming themes, follow leading practices, and be operationally feasible. The purpose of this concept brief is to provide an illustrative framework for future phases of program development.



The National Semiquincentennial Convention will be the zenith of A250 commemorations and celebrations. It is envisioned as a series of events throughout the summer of 2026 held in locations around the country and centering on a historic July 4th celebration and commemoration. The NSC will aim to reach as many Americans as possible throughout the entire United States through coordinated activations and experiences.

There will be a particularly meaningful civic convention and cultural festival held in and around Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in recognition of its historic role in our nation's founding. Philadelphia will host a civic convening of delegates from every state and territory of the U.S., discussing the most pressing issues of the day and charting our national aspirations for the next 250 years. An inspirational cultural festival, with performances drawn from across numerous American cultural traditions will occur simultaneously, representing our nation's broad diversity.

America250 envisions millions of Americans visiting Philadelphia for the marquee event in the summer of 2026, engaging in an "Olympic Village" style infrastructure in and around the city. This event should be coordinated with satellite events across the country, enabling millions of Americans from all walks of life to participate and engage.

In-person, virtual, and satellite activations must all draw upon America250's three programming themes, including celebrating the diversity of American life and our common humanity, deepening our understanding of American history to strive towards our highest ideals, and inspiring a new movement of civic engagement to build our collective future

In providing services, the Contractor shall adhere to the following general requirements:

- Collaborate with the Foundation's Planning & Programming team to coordinate, strategize, and execute work in a timely manner
- Understand America250's objectives and provide solutions and resources to efficiently and effectively meet creative needs while maintaining the highest quality standards
- Be current with best practices and provide recommendations for effective performance
- Adhere to America250's vision, themes, objectives, and brand standards
- Adhere to the Foundation's predetermined approval process

Task 1: Creative Development and Direction

The Foundation seeks a Contractor who can work with our team to develop our overarching program vision for the NSC. This includes confirming the program objectives, values, and goals, as well as recommended design principles and approach options. This work should provide a framework for not only in-person program activation in and around the city of Philadelphia, but also broader, synchronized virtual and in-person activations nationwide. Dedicated thinking around virtual touch points, thematic threads, and a larger network of programs is essential to fully capture the desired level of reach and meaningful impact.



At the launch of the project, the Foundation team will provide the Contractor with relevant existing materials, including the America250 Playbook, vision, objectives, and themes, brand materials, and initial ideation and benchmarking already developed on the NSC.

To develop a holistic approach to the NSC, we recommend at least two in-person workshops with the Foundation. Additionally, the Contractor should conduct targeted interviews with Foundation leadership, Commission representatives, and 3-5 local stakeholders.

The Contractor is expected to provide the Foundation with guidance on concepts and strategy for the development of programmatic activations, including immersive, in-person, or virtually. The final deliverable of the concept brief should include an initial thematic brief describing the program's design principles and framework, a preliminary program plan, a total of 3 to 5 conceptual renderings plus additional visual illustrations, high-level spatial planning for the in-person event in Philadelphia with optimal scale and a facilities wish list, and 3 to 5 previous benchmark programs. These benchmarks, such as the World Cup or the Olympics, should include concept elements that are comparable in scale, audience, experience, and governance to the NSC. Clear analogs should inspire novel NSC program planning.

The Foundation will also require 1-2 pitch-level visual illustrations by mid-September.

Finally, the concept brief should also define measurable standards by which the program will be judged at the end to decide whether or not it has been successful. This success criteria should help guide program development and execution.

Task 2: Operational Recommendations

In addition to the programmatic concepts, the concept brief should include high-level operational recommendations, technical requirements, and implementation strategies. The Foundation plans to use this information to help flag major milestones, dependencies, approvals, risks, and planning requirements for future phases of development and execution. These high-level operational considerations, technical requirements, and implementation strategies include recommendations and analysis on external contractor requirements, production services, permits, licensure and municipal requirements, security management considerations, and high level staffing and volunteer management recommendations. The Contractor should include a description and assessment of these operational opportunities and requirements, along with a scale of operations.

Combined with the creative vision established as part of Task 1, the Contractor should use these recommendations to develop a high-level project cost estimate and budget. The initial budget should be designed to produce a high quality program that is achievable without overspending.



Task 3: Program Schedule

Finally, the concept brief should include a Program Schedule outlining a strategy for program implementation. Developed in dialog with the America250 team, the schedule should identify duties of team members and provide a decision making diagram, critical milestones with dates, as well as approvals.

o Final Concept Brief Deliverable Components

- Task 1: Creative Development and Direction
 - Program vision, objectives, values, and goals
 - Initial thematic brief describing the program's design principles and approach
 - Preliminary Program Plan
 - Spatial planning
 - Conceptual renderings/ visual illustrations
 - Benchmarks
 - Success Criteria
- Task 2: Operational Recommendations
 - Project Cost Estimate
 - Vendor Recommendations
 - Production Services Recommendations
 - Permits and Licensure Recommendations
 - Security Management Recommendations
 - Staffing/Volunteer Recommendations
- Task 3: Program Schedule
 - Decision-making diagram
 - Program Schedule with identified milestones and approvals

o Period of Performance

The Foundation anticipates issuing a contract for this work by September 2022. All final services and deliverables under contract must be completed and delivered by January 16, 2023. Each proposal respondent (each a "Respondent") should include a proposed timeline with contingencies identified. This could include activities such as data requests, interviews, workshops, and report production. The Foundation will work with the Contractor upon notice of award to finalize the project schedule.



This scope of work includes the master planning phase only. Additional requests for proposals will be issued for future phases of work.

4 Small, Diverse and Women Owned Business Participation:

The mission of the Foundation's vendor opportunity program is to foster inclusion and help accelerate economic growth in our local communities through the engagement and empowerment of high quality and cost competitive small, minority-owned, women-owned, LGBTQ+-owned, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, person with disability-owned or indigenous person-owned. The Foundation encourages prime suppliers, contractors, and service providers to facilitate the participation of such businesses through partnerships, joint ventures, subcontracts, and other inclusive and innovative relationships.

5 Business Designation:

See Exhibit A for Respondents to complete and attach to proposal response.

6 Minimum Qualifications:

Respondents shall have the following minimum qualifications to be considered eligible to propose in response to this RFP. It is the responsibility of the Respondent to ensure and certify that it meets the minimum qualifications. Respondents not meeting all the following criteria will not have their responses considered for selection.

- 7-years previous successful experience with projects with a similar size and scale
- Vendors cannot be suspended or debarred from providing services to the U.S. Government.
- Upon the Foundation's issuance of a Notice of Intent to Award to the successful Contractor, said Contractor will agree to execute the contract and provide all required insurance within fifteen (15) calendar days or such longer period that the Foundation deems reasonable.
- The Foundation requires the Contractor to perform all design services for completion of the project within the specified time and in accordance with America250's requirements. Any subcontractors must be clearly identified in the proposal response.

7 Evaluation Factors for Selection:

In its sole discretion, The Foundation will evaluate each response based on an assessment of how well each Respondent meets the evaluation criteria listed herein. The criteria will be applied based on the information contained in the response submitted by each Respondent. Therefore, it is in the best interest of a Respondent to provide informative, concise,



well-organized technical and business information relative to the services that the Respondent is proposing to provide.

Evaluation criteria will include but not be limited to the following:

- Process and Methodology: Provide a narrative of how your firm will provide the creative services described in the scope of work. This methodology must demonstrate the capacity to complete the scope within the identified period of performance.
- Respondents are to include three (3) case studies that best demonstrate your firm's ability. Case studies must demonstrate your firm's creative and technical ability to provide master planning solutions. National experience is preferred. Each sample shall contain:
 - A general overview of the project scope
 - Project budget
 - Project start and end date
 - Performance results
- Respondents are to include one to two (1-2) visual illustrations that best represents your firm's initial, yet aspirational, ideas about the NSC.
- Staffing Organization and Proposed Key Personnel Qualifications: Provide evidence of adequate and appropriate staffing resources available to service the Foundation if awarded a contract. The Foundation encourages Respondents to augment their teams with required disciplines as needed.
- Firm Experience/Firm Profile: Provide a brief history of the company including the number of years providing creative services.
- Firm Reference: Provide a minimum of three (3) client references (contact name, company name, contact email address, and telephone number). National presence references are preferred. The Foundation reserves the right to contact references not provided in the proposal.
- Demonstrated understanding of America250's vision and brand.
- Cost and Budget: Respondents should include cost per specific task as well as a proposed payment schedule and terms.
- Vendor diversity



8 Key Proposal Dates and Instructions

America250 plans to kick off this project in September 2022.

Proposal Title: National Semiquincentennial Convention Master Planning RFP

RFP Number: A250-2022-07-002

Proposal Manager: Carly Swaim, cswaim@america250.org

- Key dates:

- RFP issue date: July 21, 2022
- Intend to respond date: August 3, 2022
- Questions due: August 3, 2022
- Response to Questions: August 5, 2022
- **Proposals due date and time: 4:59 pm ET on August 19, 2022**

The Foundation reserves the right to conduct interviews for clarification and elaboration with the top three (3) proposal Respondents.

- Completed proposal:

All responses must reference the RFP Title and RFP Number noted above. All responses must be made in accordance with the requirements set forth in the Proposal Format section.

- Proposal dates:

The Foundation reserves the right to adjust any of the RFP dates without notice. Any changes in dates will be reflected on the www.america250.org site. Proposals that arrive late will be rejected. All responses are due by 4:59 PM ET via email to cswaim@america250.org on the dates as outlined in this RFP.

- Proposal cost:

The Respondent is solely responsible for the cost of preparing and delivery of its response.

- Participation:

Please send an email to the Proposal Manager by August 2, 2022 with your intent to participate, or election not to participate, in this RFP.



- Questions:

Please submit questions related to this RFP to the Proposal Manager via email no later than August 2, 2022. All questions and answers will be sent to Respondents or posted on the America250 website. Suppliers are encouraged to pay close attention to any posted clarifications.

Contact with an America250 employee or contracted consultant regarding this RFP other than the Proposal Manager, or an individual designated in writing by the Proposal Manager, will result in disqualification of the Respondent. Normal business contact with America250 employees is permitted, exclusive of discussion of this RFP.

- Interviews:

The Foundation reserves the right to conduct interviews for clarification and elaboration with the top three (3) proposal Respondents.

9 Submission Requirements

- Response acceptance:

Responses must be valid for a minimum of 120 days following the due date. At the conclusion of this RFP the Foundation will continue discussions with only those agencies who we believe can meet both our short- and long-term objectives. The Foundation has the right to accept or reject any or all responses. Responses must include cost and terms of the goods and/or services. The Proposal will be considered received by the Proposal Manager at the time the electronic copy is received. Response forms must be submitted in the Microsoft Word, PDF or Excel format. Failure to submit your responses in this manner may result in disqualification.

- Confidentiality:

All material in this RFP is considered CONFIDENTIAL and shall not be used by the Respondent, or any of its employees, representatives or potential subcontractors for any reason other than for responding to this RFP.

- Ethics:

By signing the response, the Respondent certifies this proposal is made without any previous understanding, agreement or connection with any other person, firm, or corporation submitting a response in reply to this RFP other than as a subcontractor or supplier, and that this response is made without outside control, collusion, fraud, or other illegal or unethical actions.

- Reservations:



The RFP is not a contractual offer or commitment by the Foundation to purchase products or services. The Foundation reserves the right to reject any or all responses. The Foundation may reject any responses that it deems incomplete, unclear or irregular. The Foundation reserves the right to cancel, postpone, modify, reissue and amend this RFP at its discretion.

- Documents, attachments & forms:
The inclusion in this RFP of related documents/forms/attachments shall in no way be construed as an award of a contract for the services described in this RFP, or any portion thereof, or as an intention to award a contract. The Foundation reserves the right to alter, amend or delete any portion of these forms, to exclude any form, or to require additional forms not listed herein prior to execution of an agreement.

10 Proposal Format

The Response shall include and address, at minimum and in the same order as listed, the items listed below. Unnecessarily voluminous submittals are not considered to be beneficial to the process. Rather, clarity and conciseness, while still providing necessary detail, is preferred. Forms and templates provided in Microsoft Word or Excel format must be submitted in the same format. All RFP responses should have consecutively numbered pages.

- Cover letter (maximum one page)
- Signed by an authorized representative of the Respondent certifying the accuracy of all information in your information
- Acknowledge your agreement to be bound by and comply with the terms set forth in this response
- Documentation list:
 - Signed cover letter
 - Proposal describing Respondent's recommended process and methodology addressing requirements listed above
 - Detailed project timeline that include milestones and assumptions
 - 3 Case studies and firm profile
 - Proposed personnel
 - References
 - 1-2 visual illustrations of NSC concept
 - Cost broken out by task and terms
 - Additional attachments that support the proposal
 - Submit one (1) electronic copy of the response, including all mandatory attachments, via email to cswaim@america250.org



○ Exhibit A: Business Designation

Please identify the following business type your proposal response:

a.

- ☐ American owned
☐ Foreign owned

b.

- ☐ Public (if public, skip to section e.)
☐ Private

c.

- ☐ Large business
☐ Small business – An independently owned and operated business which, together with affiliates, has 250 or fewer employees or average annual gross receipts of \$10 million or less averaged over the previous three years.

d. Please check all eligible classifications that describe your business/vendors used:

- ☐ Women-owned*
☐ Minority-owned*
☐ LGBTQ+ -owned*
☐ Veteran-owned*
☐ Service-disabled veteran-owned*
☐ Person with a disability-owned*
☐ Indigenous person-owned*
☐ Eligible for HUBZone program

* Ownership is defined as 51% owned by one or more persons identifying with the above classifications who are U. S. citizens or legal resident aliens, or in the case of a corporation, partnership, or limited liability company or other entity, at least 51% of the equity ownership interest is owned by one or more persons identifying with the above classifications who are citizens of the United States or non-citizens who are in full compliance with the United States immigration law, and both the management and daily business operations are controlled by one or more women who are U. S. citizens or legal resident aliens.

e. If public or does not meet any of the classifications in d. above, please describe the business' diversity programs:

f. Please describe the diversity of the business' workforce:

g. Description of subcontractors used (including types of businesses utilized per definitions above)