



America250.org, Inc.

**Public Relations
Request For Proposal (“RFP”)
RFP number: America250-2024-08-001**

Key dates:

RFP issue date	August 7, 2024
Intent to respond date	August 14, 2024
Questions due	August 16, 2024
Response to questions	August 21, 2024
Proposal due date and time	August 23, 2024, at 4:59 PM EST
Interviews (TBD)	Week of September 3, 2024
Estimated contract award date	September 9, 2024
Project Kick-off	September 10, 2024



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1 Introduction

America250.org, Inc. (“A250”) is accepting proposals to retain a qualified, hands-on professional public relations firm or agency (“Contractor”) for a full suite of services, focusing on America250’s earned media strategy and execution. The successful bidder will work with America250 to inspire the American public, corporations, and potential donors through earned media at the national and local levels in broadcast and print. Proactive media outreach and leveraging both existing and identification of new contacts to raise the profile of America250 and the Semiquincentennial and increase awareness of our programs and events are the main objectives. The goal is to enhance our public relations efforts and drive greater media coverage for our organization’s initiatives and events.

While not an inclusive list, Contractor will engage in the following:

- Develop story ideas and pitches
- Conduct media outreach to target markets across the United States, including the 50 states, 5 territories and the District of Columbia
- Establish and manage public relations strategy, PR plan, and PR editorial calendar
- Identify media opportunities for the Chair and Commissioners, as needed
- Track and report on earned media
- Create talking points and fact sheets for media contacts
- Work closely with the America250 leadership and the Professional Services Team (PST)

2 Organization Background

America250 is a nonpartisan initiative working to engage every American in commemorating and celebrating the Semiquincentennial, the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It is spearheaded by the congressionally appointed U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission (the “Commission”), and its sole-supporting nonprofit organization, America250.org, Inc., together known as America250. This multi-year effort kicked off with America’s Invitation on July 4, 2023: a national public engagement campaign inviting all Americans to share their stories and their hopes and dreams for the future of this country. Leading up to July 4, 2026, America250 is working to provide opportunities for all Americans to pause and reflect on our nation’s past, honor the contributions of all Americans, and look to the future we want to create for the next generation and beyond. To learn more, visit America250.org, and follow us on X, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

America250 is building the largest and most inclusive celebration and commemoration in history for the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 2026. Key to the 250th anniversary is nationwide engagement from sea to shining sea. The team is led by the Chair and Commissioners and is made up of full-time staff and contractors to help reach the scale necessary to ensure that all 350 million Americans are reached. The managed services team of external bipartisan communications, media, strategy, constituency services, development and programmatic firms is known as the Professional Services Team (PST).



3 Objectives and Scope of Work

America250 is seeking a qualified professional public relations firm to lead the earned media strategy and execution leading up to the Semiquincentennial. The minimum scope of services and responsibilities of the Contractor shall include:

- **Media Relations:** Develop and implement a comprehensive media strategy to secure earned media coverage across relevant channels.
 - Lead proactive earned media outreach with key reporters to amplify your work and announcements and manage relationships with outlets and journalists.
 - Create internal/external talking points and reporter background briefing documents.
 - Provide media preparation and supervision of surrogates for media interviews and news appearances.
 - Provide spokesperson media training to the Chair, Commissioners, and Senior Staff, as needed.
- **Press Materials:** Work with the America250 leadership, including the Executive Director, Executive Vice President, and Chair, as well as the PST, to craft compelling press releases, media advisories, and pitches tailored to target audiences. Draft statements, quotes, talking points, op-eds, and other written materials, and work with reporters to ensure America250's voice is included in relevant stories.
- **Media Outreach:** Build and maintain relationships with key journalists and outlets. Execute targeted media outreach to secure coverage on broadcast television, radio, podcasts, newspapers, magazines, and online, among other sources.
 - Assist in fielding press inquiries for both traditional and experiential media outlets, and activate third-party stakeholders who can validate your efforts.
- **Campaign Management:** Manage and execute media campaigns, including tracking and analyzing performance metrics.
- **Crisis Communications:** Provide strategic advice and support in managing media relations during crisis situations in collaboration with the PST firms.
 - Develop a rapid response infrastructure, identify threats, and create a plan to inoculate potential attacks.
- **Issues Management/Rapid Response:** Assist the PST in developing messaging, pitches and communications strategies around initiatives and upcoming announcements, with a focus on amplifying awareness among political and community stakeholders.
- **Internal Support:** The selected firm will serve as a member of the PST participating in standing internal weekly strategy meetings, as well as ad hoc meetings as necessary when issues arise.
 - Selected firm will have key points of contact, working with the PST, the Chair and senior America250 staff on all earned media and public relations strategy in conjunction with the managed services firms.

Period of Performance

A250 anticipates issuing a contract for this work on or about September 9, 2024, and the contract



term shall be for the remainder of FY24 (i.e., September 30, 2024) through the end of FY25 (September 30, 2025) with an option for renewal through FY26.

4 Small, Diverse, and Women-Owned Business Participation

America250 is dedicated to fostering inclusion and helping to 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.

America250 encourages Contractor 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 the proposal response. Any partners, subcontractors, or other entities intended to be used during the contract period must also complete Exhibit A and be included in the proposal response.

6 Minimum Qualifications

Respondents shall have the following minimum qualifications to be considered eligible to submit a proposal. 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 be considered for selection.

- At least 10 years of previous successful experience with similar projects of at least equal size and scale.
- Cannot be suspended or debarred from providing services to the U.S. Government (i.e., authorized in the System for Award and Management (SAM.gov)).
- Upon A250's issuance of a Notice of Intent to Award to the successful respondent, said respondent will agree to execute the contract and provide all required insurance and payment information and performance bonds, if any, within fifteen (15) business days or such longer period that A250 deems reasonable.
- Any subcontractors must be clearly identified in the proposal and are subject to the same minimum qualifications.

7 Evaluation Factors for Selection

In its sole discretion, A250 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. A250 reserves the right in its discretion to make a selection based directly on the proposals submitted or to negotiate further with one or more of the Respondents. Respondents selected under this RFP will be chosen on



the basis of their apparent ability to best meet the overall objectives, as determined in A250's sole discretion.

It is the intent of A250 to award a contract to the respondent whose proposal is in the best interest of America250 and based upon, but not limited to, the respondent's demonstrated experience and ability. If America250 conducts interviews, respondents selected for an interview shall be prepared to present substantive evidence of its to provide the services. The final decision will be made by the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission.

Proposals will be evaluated by a committee and based on the criteria listed below. The criteria are itemized with their respective weights for a maximum total of one hundred (100) points per committee member.

- Experience and Expertise (25 points): Demonstrated experience in earned media and successful outcomes in similar projects with examples of the robust execution of a media strategy.
- Strategic Approach (25 points): Creativity and effectiveness of the proposed media strategy.
- Team Qualifications (25 points): Relevant experience and qualifications of team members.; including references and feedback from past clients.
- Budget (25 points)
 - Value for money and alignment with our budget.
 - Provide a basic budget and include cost options for enhancements.

8 Budget and Invoicing

Proposals must include cost proposals including all aspects of the services. Respondents may provide options to mitigate costs.

9 Key Proposal Dates, General Instructions, and Submission Requirements

America250 plans to kick off this project by **September 10, 2024**.

RFP Title: Public Relations Support

RFP Number: A250-2024-08-001

Proposal Manager: Jennifer Condon, Interim Executive Director, U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission and Executive Vice President, America250.org, Inc.

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- Interviews (TBD): week of September 3, 2024
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- Completed proposal:

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

- Proposal dates:

A250 reserves the right to adjust any of the RFP dates without notice. Any changes in dates will be posted on its website and, if possible, sent by email to the email identified as the respondent's POC. Proposals that arrive late will be rejected. **All submissions are due by 4:59 PM ET on August 23 via email to jcondon@america250.org.**

- Proposal receipt and validity:

Submissions must be valid for a minimum of 120 days following the due date. After this RFP closes, A250 will continue discussions with only those respondents who we believe provide the services. A250 has the right to accept or reject any or all submissions. The submission will be considered received by the Proposal Manager at the time the electronic copy is received. Submissions must be in Microsoft Word, PD, or Excel format. Failure to submit in this manner may result in disqualification.

- Proposal cost:

The respondent is solely responsible for the cost of preparing and delivering its response, including any costs associated with an interview if so requested.

- Participation and Questions:

Please send an email to the Proposal Manager by **August 12, 2024**, with your intent to participate, or election not to participate, in this RFP. Questions related to this RFP should also be submitted to the Proposal Manager via email no later than **August 14, 2024**. All questions and answers will be sent to all respondents.

Contact with any A250 or Commission 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.

- Confidentiality:

All work products developed as part of this Work Made for Hire agreement are considered CONFIDENTIAL and shall not be used by the respondent or any of its employees, representatives, or potential subcontractors for any reason without prior written permission from A250.

- Work Product Ownership:

Submissions to this RFP will become the property of America250 and will form the basis of



negotiations of the contract between A250 and the successful respondent. In addition, all works created by Contractor for America250 under the awarded contract shall be considered Works Made for Hire under the U.S. Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. S § 101. As such, all intellectual property rights, including the design and copyright in the work, belong exclusively to America250, and nothing shall be interpreted or construed as a transfer, assignment, or license of the work to the Contractor or any third party. The Contractor's design shall be original work to ensure that it is free and clear of any intellectual property claims from third parties or any other use limitations.

- **Ethics:**

By signing the submission, the respondent certifies its submission 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 submission is made without outside control, collusion, fraud, or other illegal or unethical actions, including any conflict of interest.

- **Reservations:**

The RFP is not a contractual offer or commitment by A250 to purchase any products or services for any time period referenced in this RFP. A250 reserves the right to reject any or all responses. A250 may reject any responses that it deems incomplete, unclear, or irregular. A250 reserves the right to cancel, postpone, modify, reissue, and amend this RFP at its discretion.

- **Documents, attachments, and 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. A250 reserves the right to alter, amend or delete any portion of the RFP and these forms, to exclude any form, or to require additional forms not listed herein prior to execution of an agreement.

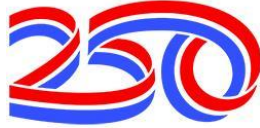
10 Proposal Format

The submission shall be one (1) electronic copy of your submission proposal, including all mandatory attachments, via email, and include an address 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, are preferred. Forms and templates provided in Microsoft Word or Excel format must be submitted in the same format. All RFP submissions should have consecutively numbered pages.

- **Cover Letter**

- Written on the respondent's letterhead, not to exceed one page
- Identify the submission as a proposal stating the exact name of the RFP and number, and include the respondent's name, title, address, phone number, mobile number, and email address of the person or persons to be used for contact and who will be authorized to represent the respondent
- Acknowledge the agreement to be bound by and comply with the terms set forth in

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- this RFP
- Signed by an authorized representative of the respondent
- Table of Contents
 - A comprehensive listing of material included
- Executive Summary
 - Summarize and highlight the contents of the submission to provide a broad understanding of your approach, qualifications, experience, and staffing.
- Qualifications and Experience
 - Detailed explanation of experience and financial capability and required licenses, if any, to perform the required services.
- Cost
 - Excel spreadsheet of base costs
 - Cost mitigation options
- Required Information
 - Respondent's background/history and any historical connections to past national celebrations or moments
 - Four references
 - Four case studies
 - Identification of the specific team members who will be the day-to-day points of contact for this project, serving on the PST
 - Team CVs and headshots who will be specifically working on this project
 - Exhibit A
- Additional Data
 - Material and data not specifically requested for evaluation but which respondent believes is helpful for America250 to consider. This shall not be excessive and cannot be more than three pages.



Exhibit A: Business Designation

Please complete the below as well as expand, as deemed necessary, in your proposal. This must also be completed by any other entity partnering with you or that you intend to use at any point during the contract period.

- a. American owned
 Foreign owned

- b. Public
 Private

- c. Large business
 Small business – 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. (if public, skip to section e.)
 - 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).