

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

CONSULTANT SERVICES FOR OKI FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

Issued by:



Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments
720 East Pete Rose Way, Suite 420
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
513-621-6300
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Schedule:

Please note dates marked with an asterisk (*) are subject to change.

RFQ Released to the Public	January 5, 2023
Deadline for Written Questions	January 19, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. EDT
Submittal Deadline Date	February 9, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. EDT
Public Opening	February 10, 2023 - 2:00 p.m. EST via Zoom
Short List	February 16, 2023*
Interviews and Selection	March 2, 2023*
Notice to Proceed	March 3, 2023*

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

This page is intended as a guideline to assist Proposers in successfully completing the necessary paperwork. You are strongly encouraged to read the entire document very carefully. This page is NOT intended to replace the more detailed instructions that are included in the solicitation.

- Be sure to regularly check the Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments' (OKI's) website, www.oki.org, for any changes or updates to the solicitation. Any changes will be documented in writing and labeled as addenda.
- It is extremely important that all required forms be completed. If a form does not apply to your business or Statement of Qualifications (SOQ), please mark the form "Not Applicable", sign and date the form. **Failure to complete all forms will result in your SOQ being ruled non-responsive. Non-responsive SOQs will not be evaluated.**
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Obligation: As a grantee of the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), we have agreed to ensure that DBEs have the maximum opportunity to participate in the performance of contracts. Therefore, it is imperative that you read the DBE Section and complete the necessary paperwork.
- Please read the document to make sure that you have returned your SOQ in the correct format.
- Restrictions on Communication During Solicitation, Offer & Award Period: All inquiries, and/or other correspondence regarding solicitations, excluding protests, must be directed, in writing via electronic mail, to Jake Hesseling at jhesseling@oki.org. No other contact regarding this RFQ with OKI staff is permissible until the public opening of the SOQs. Oral communications regarding this solicitation shall not be considered official communications. OKI is not responsible for and will not be legally bound by any oral statements made by its employees regarding any solicitation.
- Make sure the SOQ response is received by OKI's Finance Department by the designated date and time. **Late SOQs will not be accepted – NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- It is the sole responsibility of the Proposer to ensure that its submission is successfully delivered to OKI by the specified date and time. OKI will not be responsible for late or lost deliveries of SOQs.

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SECTION I
INVITATION AND OVERVIEW OF RFQ DOCUMENT FIRMS
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

1.1 **Invitation**: The Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI) is now accepting Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) for professional services to perform communications planning and public relations work to promote its upcoming Freight Plan.

OKI, as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky metropolitan area. OKI will serve as the project manager and contract directly with the selected firm resulting from this RFQ.

If the Proposer is a team, the team must be led by a firm that has the managerial and technical resources to communicate and coordinate directly with OKI and manage the work of the entire team. The team lead will function as the Prime and will be expected to assist and advise OKI in managing the project.

1.2 **Overview of RFQ Document**: this document is organized in the following manner to guide the Proposer through the SOQ submission process:

1.2.1. **Section II: RFQ Process, Rules, and Requirements** describes the RFQ schedule and process, the rules that will apply to and govern the submission process, and several specific requirements Proposers must satisfy to be eligible for an award.

1.2.2. **Section III: Instructions for Submission of Statement of Qualifications** describes the specific information Proposers must include in any submission of a SOQ.

1.2.3. **Section IV: Awarded Contract Requirements** describes contract terms that will be included in the ultimate award contract executed between the selected firm and OKI.

1.2.4. **Section V: Project Scope** describes the scope of services OKI seeks to procure through this RFQ.

1.2.5. **Section VI: Evaluation Criteria** describes the criteria by which any SOQ will be evaluated.

1.2.6. **Section VII: Checklist and Attachments** provides a checklist of the documents required to complete an SOQ together with all of the specific attachments that must be filled out and included with a submission.

SECTION II
RFQ PROCESS, RULES, AND REQUIREMENTS
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

2.1 RFQ SCHEDULE AND PROCESS

2.1.1. **Solicitation Schedule:** This solicitation will be governed by the following schedule. Please note dates marked with an asterisk (*) are subject to change:

RFQ Released to the Public	January 5, 2023
Deadline for RFQ Written Questions	January 19, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. EDT
Submittal Deadline Date	February 9, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. EDT
Public Opening	February 10, 2023 - 2:00 p.m. EDT <small>via Zoom</small>
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2.1.2. **Evaluation Criteria:** Statements of Qualifications submitted for evaluation by interested firms shall be evaluated according to the criteria described in Section V of this RFQ. Bids for the cost of the proposed project shall not be a factor in the evaluation of firms until negotiations are begun in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 153.691 and KRS 45A.750. **Cost proposals must not be part of the submittal. Submittals containing any costs, cost proposals, or any other cost related figures will be rejected.**

2.1.3. **Cost of Preparation:** Respondents are responsible for all costs associated with the preparation of materials in response to this RFQ. OKI assumes no responsibility for such costs. OKI reserves the right to waive any formality in the submitted SOQs, to reject any and all SOQs, or to re-advertise for additional SOQs.

2.1.4. **Submittal:** All items requested as part of the RFQ must be completed in their entirety. Failure to do so can result in the submittal being declared unresponsive and will be automatically DISQUALIFIED. OKI must be in receipt of all SOQs by February 9, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. EDT at the following address. **One (1) original and FIVE (5) copies of the SOQ are required.**

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments
Attn: Finance Department
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS – Statement of Qualifications
720 E. Pete Rose Way, Suite 420; Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

The SOQ should be placed in a sealed envelope and clearly marked “**FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS – Statement of Qualifications**”. Submissions not marked clearly will not be opened. Submissions received after the deadline will not be evaluated. No exceptions.

2.1.5. **SOQ Opening:** Sealed SOQs will be accepted in accordance with the instructions detailed in Section 2.1.4. The opening will be held on February 10, 2023, at 2:00

p.m. EDT via Zoom. See OKI website (www.oki.org) for more details. The public opening is open to the public. Attendance at the public opening is not a requirement.

2.2 RFQ PROCESS RULES AND REGULATIONS

2.2.1. **Questions and Inquiries:** Interested firms' questions and inquiries on the specifications of this SOQ shall be submitted using only the following two methods.

- a. Interested firms' questions and inquiries on the specifications of this SOQ shall be submitted in writing via email to Jake Hesseling at jhesseling@oki.org. Questions will be accepted until 12:00 p.m. on January 19, 2023. The responses to all questions will be posted on www.oki.org by January 30, 2023.

Any information provided is not official unless reduced to writing by OKI. Any unauthorized contact with any other official or employee in connection with this RFQ is prohibited and shall be cause for disqualification of the Firm.

Careful attention must be paid to all requested items contained in this RFQ. Interested firms are invited to submit SOQs in accordance with the requirements of this RFQ. Please read the entire package before responding. Interested firms shall make the necessary entry in all blanks provided for the responses. All SOQs shall be returned in a sealed envelope and clearly marked "**FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS – Statement of Qualifications**" on the outside of the envelope.

2.2.2. **Terms of SOQ Binding:** by submitting an SOQ, the Firm acknowledges and agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions of the solicitation. This SOQ document including all terms, conditions and specifications contained herein shall become the basis of contract upon award by OKI. It is further agreed between the parties, that any change of the RFQ must be formalized by issuance of a written modification. If any modifications are made to this RFQ, notice will be posted on www.oki.org.

2.2.3. **Restrictions on Communications with OKI during Solicitation, Offer, and Award Period:** From the date of issuance of this solicitation through the date of contract award by OKI, all official communications will be transmitted in writing (defined as being sent or received via electronic mail). Oral communications regarding this solicitation shall not be considered official communications. OKI is not responsible for any oral statements made by its employees regarding this solicitation. Please see Section 2.2.12 for instructions regarding the submittal of protests.

2.2.4. **Amendments to Solicitation (Addenda)/Postponement of Submission Deadline:** OKI reserves the right to revise or amend the RFQ up to the time set for the submission of SOQs. Such revisions and amendments, if any, shall be announced by written addendum to the RFQ. If an addendum significantly changes the RFQ, the date set for submission may be postponed by such number of days as, in the opinion of OKI, shall enable potential Proposers to revise their SOQ. In any case,

the submission deadline shall be at least five (5) business days after the last addendum, and the addendum shall include an announcement of the new date, if applicable, for the submission of the SOQ. Upon issuance, addenda will be considered part of the RFQ and will prevail over inconsistent or conflicting provisions contained in the original RFQ. Copies of all addenda will be made available on OKI's website at www.oki.org. Proposers shall acknowledge receipt of all addenda by completing the Cover Sheet found in Section VII of this RFQ.

- 2.2.5. **Modification of Statements of Qualification:** Except at the written request of OKI, no SOQ may be modified after the deadline for submission identified in Section 2.1.4.
- 2.2.6. **Single Response to Solicitation:** If only one SOQ is received in response to this solicitation, an evaluation of the single respondent's SOQ will be performed. If the single respondent is determined to be qualified, OKI Will request a detailed scope of services and cost proposal from the qualified proposer.
- 2.2.7. **Confidential/Proprietary Information:** Once submitted, an SOQ becomes the property of OKI. OKI will release no information about the SOQ submittal until all requests have been received and are deemed a matter of public record.
- 2.2.8. **Reserved Rights:** OKI reserves the right to reject any and all SOQs or any portion of a specific SOQ for any reason. We also reserve the right to award a single contract or multiple contracts as a result of this solicitation; however, issuance of this RFQ and receipt of SOQs does not commit OKI to award a contract or contracts. OKI has the sole right to select the successful submission for contract award; to reject any SOQ as unsatisfactory or non-responsive due to non-conformance with the requirements of this RFQ; to cancel the solicitation and to advertise for new SOQs or not to award a contract as a result of this RFQ.
- 2.2.9. Failure to submit ALL forms and information required in this SOQ may be grounds for disqualification.
- 2.2.10. **Ambiguity, Conflict, or other Errors in the RFQ:** If a Firm discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the RFQ, they shall immediately notify OKI of such error in writing and request modification or clarification of the document.
- 2.2.11. **Conflicts of Interest:** OKI's employees and council are bound by a Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct that prohibits its employees and directors engaged in the award and administration of contracts, or any person acting on their behalf, from accepting, directly or indirectly, any gift with a value of more than a nominal amount, including meals or tickets to sporting events, from any person with whom the employee interacts on official OKI business. Therefore, Proposer, or its subcontractors, may not make gifts or favors to any employee or director. It is a violation of the Code of Ethics and Standards of Conduct for any OKI employee to accept any such gift or favor.

- 2.2.12. **Protests:** All solicitations made by OKI are open and free to all competing firms, whereby all have a reasonable chance to be successful and be awarded the contract. If an individual or firm feels that the RFQ is unfair for whatever reason, they should request, in writing, a copy of OKI's Title VI Complaint Procedure.
- 2.2.13. **News Releases:** No news releases pertaining to the request for qualification, or any project that may arise, are to be made without prior approval of OKI.
- 2.2.14. **Funding:** The project is being funded by Federal, State and Local Funds through OKI's cost allocation plan in cooperation with the Ohio Department of Transportation and with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and with Indiana Department of Transportation.
- 2.2.15. **Withdrawal:** No qualification can be withdrawn after it has been opened.
- 2.2.16. **Data:** All data included in the SOQ is proprietary to OKI. It will be used exclusively for this process and will not be shared with any other firm or used for any other purpose.

2.3 **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION OF AN SOQ**

- 2.3.1. **DBE:** OKI encourages the use of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises. OKI's aspirational DBE target DBE goal for this project is five percent. A submitted SOQ must include Attachments #3 and #4 included in Section VII of this RFQ.
- 2.3.2. **Prime Responsibilities:** The Prime will be required to assume responsibility for all services required by the contract regardless of who provides them. Further, OKI will consider the Prime to be the sole point of contact with regard to contractual matter, including payment of any and all charges resulting from the contract.

SECTION III
INSTRUCTION FOR SUBMISSION OF SOQ
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 **Information Required from the Proposer:** To be eligible for evaluation as a complete, responsive submittal to this solicitation, all SOQs must contain all the following documents, properly signed (as required), fully completed and arranged in the following order:
- 3.1.1. **Cover Sheet:** The cover sheet for the SOQ must include all the information found on the form included as Attachment #1 in Section VII of the RFQ. As a condition of SOQ responsiveness, this document must be fully completed, signed, and submitted with the SOQ.
 - 3.1.2. **Approach to Project and Management of Subs:** This document should describe how the Proposer would approach and manage the specific tasks described in the Project Scope found in Section V of this RFQ. The document shall include a narrative description of how the Proposer would conduct the project and generally manage its subcontractors and task orders for various projects assigned by OKI. There is no prescribed format for this document. The format of the document shall be at the discretion of Proposer. This document should not exceed five (5) pages.
 - 3.1.3. **References/List of Relevant Work:** This document, Attachment #2 in Section VII of this RFQ, shall include a list and description of the three most recent and most relevant work examples performed by the Proposer and its team members. As a condition of SOQ responsiveness, this document must be fully completed and submitted with the SOQ.
 - 3.1.4. **Conflict of Interest and Bribery Clause Statement:** This document, Attachment #3 in Section VII of this RFQ, shall serve as a list of all entities and/or individuals with which the Proposer, including the firms comprising the Proposer's team (if applicable), has relationships that may create or appear to create conflicts of interest with the work to be performed as a result of the contract. As a condition of SOQ responsiveness, this document must be fully completed, signed, and submitted with the SOQ. By signing the Attachment #3 document, the Firm certifies that no employee of his/hers/theirs, any affiliate or sub, has bribed or attempted to bribe an officer or employee of OKI.
 - 3.1.5. **Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE):** These documents, Attachments #4 and #5, in Section VII of this RFQ, are required for compliance with the USDOT's DBE requirements related to the participation by in federally funded contracts and shall serve as proof of the Proposer's "good faith efforts" to, where practicable, include certified DBE firms on their teams. OKI's aspirational DBE contract goal for the entire funded project is five percent. As a condition of SOQ responsiveness, these documents must be fully completed and submitted with the SOQ package.

- 3.1.6. **Certification Regarding Lobbying:** This document, Attachment #6 in Section VII of this RFQ, is required by the USDOT to document a Proposer's compliance with 31 U.S.C. § 1352 (as amended by the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995). As a condition of SOQ responsiveness, this document must be fully completed, signed, and submitted with the SOQ package.

**SECTION IV
AWARDED CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS**

4.1 **SUBMISSION OF A SOQ IN RESPONSE TO THIS RFQ SHALL ESTABLISH PROPOSER'S WILLINGNESS TO EXECUTE AN AWARD CONTRACT INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, THE FOLLOWING CONTRACT TERMS.**

4.2 **Cancellation:** If the services to be performed hereunder by the Firm are not performed in an acceptable manner, OKI may cancel the contract for cause by providing written notice to the Firm, giving at least thirty (30) days' notice of the proposed cancellation and the reasons for same. During that time period, the Firm may seek to bring the performance of services hereunder to a level that is acceptable to OKI, and OKI may rescind the cancellation.

4.2.1. **Termination for Cause**

4.2.1.1 OKI may terminate a contract because of the Firm's failure to perform its contractual duties.

4.2.1.2 If a consultant is determined to be in default, OKI shall notify the Firm of the determination in writing and may include a specified date by which the Firm shall cure the identified deficiencies. OKI may proceed with termination if the Firm fails to cure the deficiencies within the specified time.

4.2.1.3 A default in performance by a Firm for which a contract may be terminated shall include, but shall not necessarily be limited to:

- a. Failure to perform the contract according to its terms, conditions and specifications;
- b. Failure to make delivery within the time specified or according to a delivery schedule fixed by the contract;
- c. The filing of a bankruptcy petition by or against the Firm; or
- d. Actions that endanger the health, safety or welfare of OKI or citizens of the region.

4.2.2. **At Will Termination:** Notwithstanding the above provisions, OKI may terminate this contract at will in accordance with the law upon providing thirty (30) days' written notice of that intent. Payment for services or goods received prior to termination shall be made by OKI provided those goods or services were provided in a manner acceptable to OKI. Payment for those goods and services shall not be unreasonably withheld.

4.3 **Assignment of Contract:** The Firm shall not assign or subcontract any portion of the Contract without the express written consent of OKI. Any purported assignment or subcontract in violation hereof shall be void. It is expressly acknowledged that OKI shall

never be required or obligated to consent to any request for assignment or subcontract; and further that such refusal to consent can be for any or no reason, fully within the sole discretion of OKI.

- 4.4 **No Waiver:** No failure or delay by OKI in exercising any right, remedy, power or privilege hereunder, nor any single or partial exercise thereof, nor the exercise of any other right, remedy, power or privilege shall operate as a waiver hereof or thereof. No failure or delay by OKI in exercising any right, remedy, power or privilege under or in respect of this Contract shall affect the rights, remedies, powers or privileges OKI hereunder or shall operate as a waiver thereof.
- 4.5 **Authority to do Business:** The Firm must be a duly organized and authorized to do business under the laws of the state or states in which the awarded work will take place. Firm must be in good standing and have full legal capacity to provide the services specified under this Contract. The Firm must have all necessary right and lawful authority to enter into this Contract for the full term hereof and that proper corporate or other action has been duly taken authorizing the Firm to enter into this Contract. The Firm will provide OKI with a copy of a corporate resolution authorizing this action and a letter from an attorney confirming that the Firm is authorized to do business in the States of Ohio and Kentucky if requested. All SOQs must be signed by a duly authorized officer, agent or employee of the Firm.
- 4.6 **Governing Law:** This Contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the of the state or states in which the awarded work will take place and as determined in the discretion of OKI.
- 4.7 **Ability to Meet Obligations:** Firm affirmatively states that there are no actions, suits or proceedings of any kind pending against Firm or, to the knowledge of the Firm, threatened against Firm before or by any court, governmental body or agency or other tribunal or authority which would, if adversely determined, have a materially adverse effect on the authority or ability of Firm to perform its obligations under this Contract, or which question the legality, validity or enforceability hereof or thereof.
- 4.8 **Compliance with** Each SOQ shall comply with all federal, state, and local regulations concerning design and engineering services. The Firm agrees to comply with all statutes, rules, and regulations governing safe and healthful working conditions, including the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970, *29 U.S.C. 650 et.seq.*, as amended, Ohio Revised Code Section 4101 or KRS Chapter 338, as applicable. The Firm also agrees to notify OKI in writing immediately upon detection of any unsafe and/or unhealthful working conditions at the job site. Submitting firm agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold OKI harmless from all penalties, fines or other expenses arising out of the alleged violation of said laws.
- 4.9 **Hold Harmless and Indemnification Clause:** Firm agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend OKI, its elected and appointed officials, employees, agents and successors in interest from all claims, damages, losses and expenses including attorneys' fees, arising out of or resulting, directly or indirectly, from the Firm's (or Firm's sub if any) performance or breach of the contract provided that such claim, damage, loss, or expense is (1) attributable

to personal injury, bodily injury, sickness, death, or to injury to or destruction of property, including the loss of use resulting therefrom, or from negligent acts, errors or omissions and (2) not caused by the negligent act or omission or willful misconduct of OKI or its elected and appointed officials and employees acting within the scope of their employment. This Hold Harmless and Indemnification Clause shall in no way be limited by any financial responsibility or insurance requirements and shall survive the termination of this Contract.

- 4.10 **Insurance Requirements:** Prior to commencing work, Firm shall provide insurance from an insurer licensed in the state where the insured risks are located. Firm shall comply with workers compensation insurance or premium requirements for the state or states in which their employees are doing the work. For any work performed in Kentucky the Firm shall obtain at its own cost and expense the following types of insurance through insurance companies licensed in the State of Kentucky. Insurance written by non-admitted carriers will also be considered acceptable, in accordance with Kentucky Insurance Law (KRS 304.10-040). Workers' Compensation written through qualified group self-insurance programs in accordance with Kentucky Revised Statutes (KRS 342.350) will also be acceptable. The Firm shall not commence work under this Contract until all insurance required under the Contract Document has been obtained and until copies of policies or certificates thereof are submitted to and approved by the OKI Finance Department. The Firm shall not allow any sub to commence work until the insurance required of such sub has been obtained and copies of Certificates of Insurance retained by Firm evidencing proof of coverages.

Without limiting Firm's indemnification requirements, it is agreed that Firm shall maintain in force at all times during the performance of this agreement the following policy or policies of insurance covering its operations, and require sub, if subcontracting is authorized, to procure and maintain these same policies. OKI may require Firm to supply proof of sub firm's insurance via Certificates of Insurance, or at OKI's option, actual copies of policies.

- 4.10.1. The following clause shall be added to the Firm's (and approved subs) Comprehensive General Liability Policies:

"OKI, its elected and appointed officials, employees, agents and successors are added as an "Additional Insured" as respects operations of the Named Insured performed relative to the contract."

- 4.10.2. The insurance to be procured and maintained and the **minimum** Limits of Liability shall be as follows, unless different Limits are specified by addendum to the Contract:

4.10.2.1 **COMMERCIAL GENERAL LIABILITY**, via the Occurrence Form, with a **\$1,000,000** Combined Single Limit for any one occurrence and **\$2,000,000** aggregate for Bodily Injury, Personal Injury and Property Damage, including:

- a. Premises - Operations Coverage

- b. Completed Operations
- c. Contractual Liability
- d. Broad Form Property Damage
- e. Independent Firms Protective Liability
- f. Personal Injury

4.10.2.2 **AUTOMOBILE LIABILITY** insuring all Owned, Non-Owned and Hired Motor Vehicles. The minimum coverage Liability Limit is **\$1,000,000** Combined Single Limit for any one accident. The Limit of Liability may be subject to increase according to any applicable State or Federal Transportation Regulations.

4.10.2.3 **WORKERS' COMPENSATION** insuring the employers' obligations under Kentucky Revised Statutes Chapter 342. **EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY** with a **\$100,000** Limit of Liability for Each Accident/**\$500,000** Disease - Policy Limit/**\$100,000** Disease - Each Employee

4.10.2.4 **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY (Errors and Omissions Liability)** insurance policy, which includes a **minimum** limit of liability of **\$1,000,000** for each Wrongful Act. In the event that the Firm's policy is written on a "Claims Made" Form, the Firm shall, after work has been completed, furnish evidence that the liability coverage has been maintained for at least one year after completion of work, either by submitting renewal policies with a Retroactive Date of not later than the date work commenced under this contract, or by evidence that the Firm has purchased an Extended Reporting Period Endorsement that will apply to any and all claims arising from work performed under this contract.

4.11 Acceptability of Insurers: Insurance is to be placed with Insurance Companies with an A. M. Best Rating of no less than "B+ VI", unless proper financial information relating to the Company is submitted to and approved by OKI's Finance Department.

4.12 Miscellaneous:

4.12.1. The Firm shall procure and maintain insurance policies as described herein and for which the OKI Finance Department shall be furnished Certificates of Insurance upon the execution of the Contract. The Certificates shall include provisions stating that the policies may not be cancelled without OKI having been provided at least (30) thirty days written notice. The Certificates shall identify the Contract to which they apply and shall include the name and address of the person executing the Certificate of Insurance as well as the person's signature. If policies expire before the completion of the Contract, renewal Certificates of Insurance shall be furnished to OKI's Finance Department before the expiration date.

- 4.12.2. Certificates of Insurance as required above shall be furnished, as called for no later than five (5) days after the successful submitting firm is notified of award by OKI to:

Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana Regional Council of Governments
Attn: Finance Department
720 East Pete Rose Way, Suite 420
Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

- 4.12.3. The Firm agrees that it will not materially alter any of the insurance policies currently in force and relied on under this agreement. Further, the Firm will not reduce any coverage amount below the limits required in this agreement.
- 4.12.4. Approval of the insurance by OKI shall not in any way relieve or decrease the liability of the Firm hereunder. It is expressly understood that OKI does not in any way represent that the specified Limits of Liability or coverage or policy forms are sufficient or adequate to protect the interest or liabilities of the Firm.
- 4.13 Violations of and Compliance with Ohio and Kentucky Laws: The Firm shall reveal any final determination of a violation by the Firm or sub within the previous five (5) year period pursuant to Ohio Revised Code sections 5733, 5740, 5747, 4111, 4101, 4141 and 4123 or KRS Chapters 136, 139, 141, 337, 338, 341 and 342 that apply to the Firm or sub. The Firm shall be in continuous compliance with the provisions of Ohio Revised Code sections 5733, 5740, 5747, 4111, 4101, 4141 and 4123 and KRS Chapters 136, 139, 141, 337, 338, 341 and 342 that apply to the Firm or sub for the duration of the contract.
- 4.14 The firm shall comply with all pertinent local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including civil rights that apply, whether or not specifically identified.

SECTION V
PROJECT SCOPE
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

- 5.1 Project Purpose: OKI will engage a consultant to assist in the development of a communications campaign to publicize its newly released Freight Plan for the OKI Region. The OKI Freight Plan will be completed by June 30, 2023. The work outlined in this RFQ will start prior to the finalization of the OKI Freight Plan. The consultants work will conclude after the first phase of the campaign ends (up to three months after release of the Freight Plan or September 30, 2023).
- 5.2 Background: In 2011, OKI developed and approved a Regional Freight Plan, which collected information on the freight assets and trends in the OKI region, future freight trends, and recommendations for improved freight activity. OKI is currently developing a new plan that will summarize existing freight activity in the region, provide interactive tools illustrating the underlying data, analyze opportunities and impediments of the region's freight activity, complete forecasts for future freight activities, and make recommendations to improve the region's facilitation of freight activities.
- 5.2.1. OKI's first phase is completed, with OKI staff documenting existing freight conditions in the region and generating narratives and visualizations to present the current state of the region's freight ecosystem.
- 5.2.2. OKI is currently undertaking the second phase in partnership with a consultant that is assisting with summarizing future conditions, conducting needs analysis, and developing recommendations specific to the region's freight activity today and to year 2050.
- 5.2.3. OKI is looking for a partner to assist with the development of a communications plan to promote the new Freight Plan with target audiences through earned and owned (not paid) media channels.
- 5.2.4. OKI will provide preliminary materials from the ongoing work on the freight plan to inform communications and marketing materials. OKI's communications team will work closely with the consultant to identify key messages, audiences, and tactics around freight plan communications and public relations efforts.
- 5.3 Proposed Professional Services:
- 5.3.1. Distill the new Freight Plan into accessible messages and pieces of content.
- 5.3.2. Develop campaign collateral consisting of messaging, video, and designed visual assets for continued use in publicizing the Freight Plan.
- 5.3.3. Work with OKI staff during the first three months after the release of the Freight Plan to assist in the execution of the prepared communications plan.
- 5.3.4. Successfully communicate the Freight Plan's findings to target audiences over the months and years following its release.

- 5.3.5. Task 1: Analyze key data and findings of Freight Plan to determine key messages and communications.
 - 5.3.5.1 Consultant will review the plan and will assist in developing messaging for each key part of the plan, including for the executive summary and each of the five freight transportation goals (safety, infrastructure condition, mobility and reliability, environmental sustainability, and economic competitiveness).
 - 5.3.5.2 Consultant will consider the development of messaging around the individual freight transportation modes (road/truck, rail/train, river/barge, runway/air transport, pipeline).
- 5.3.6. Task 2: Identify target audiences based on each aspect of the plan.
 - 5.3.6.1 Consultant will identify target audiences for each focus of the plan, including industry media and relevant stakeholders, and develop messaging for each focus.
 - 5.3.6.2 Target audiences should include OKI members, elected officials, transportation professionals, public and private freight stakeholders, and the public, in addition to other recommendations the consultant might present.
- 5.3.7. Task 3: Develop communications plan to reach relevant audiences.
 - 5.3.7.1 For each focus of the Freight Plan, consultant will assist in developing a communications plan that addresses the audience, tools, and tactics proposed for use in reaching each audience with respect to each focus.
 - 5.3.7.2 The tools and tactics in communication plan should address media outreach, proposed website content, social media, video, designed collateral, speaker presentations, and email, in addition to any other recommendations the consultant presents.
- 5.3.8. Task 4: Produce material that effectively communicates the Freight Plan’s key findings.
 - 5.3.8.1 Consultant will produce relevant material that leverages the depth and breadth of the Freight Plan to succinctly communicate the Freight Plan’s findings.
 - 5.3.8.2 Consultant will work with OKI to identify and produce media pitches, website content, social media posts, explainer videos, graphics, and other material that advances the overall communications plan.

- 5.3.8.3 Media pitches should focus on both local media with a focus on impact to the region and industry media related to OKI's leading work in freight.
 - 5.3.8.4 Website content should focus on a blog series and ways to distill individual findings of the freight plan into accessible posts.
 - 5.3.9. Task 5: Assist OKI in executing the communications plan for up to three months after release.
 - 5.3.9.1 Following the development of the communications plan with supporting materials and the release of the Freight Plan, the consultant will work with OKI to execute the communications plan for up to three months.
- 5.4 Deliverables:
 - 5.4.1. Detailed communications timeline and action plan for the three-month campaign following the Freight Plan release.
 - 5.4.2. List of planned activities for OKI to independently execute past the three-month campaign following conclusion of consultant activities.
 - 5.4.3. List of Recommendations on what other channels, content, or audiences may be well-suited for the promotion of the Freight Plan.
 - 5.4.4. Designed collateral, content, and messaging, including press releases, images, and blog posts for each of the five focuses of the Freight Plan.
- 5.5 Project Schedule: The chosen consultant will agree to start work on the date of the official notice to proceed, which is March 3, 2023. Much of the consultant work will take place before the publication of the Freight Plan with the planning and development of content and communications. Once the Freight Plan is published (by June 30, 2023), consultant will assist OKI staff in execution of planned communications. The consultant will then conclude work by September 30, 2023.

SECTION VI
EVALUATION CRITERIA
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 Evaluation Criteria: The Statement of Qualifications will be reviewed and evaluated by a Selection Committee according to the firm/project team’s relevant knowledge and experience in the elements described in the summary of services requested and the ability to undertake and complete the project in a timely manner. Specific evaluation criteria will include the following:

Experience working with Non-Profit/government organizations	20%
Experience with local media in Cincinnati	20%
Demonstrated experience conducting public relations campaigns	20%
Ability to communicate complex info via different mediums (visual, written, etc.)	20%
Ability to provide consistent, timely services	20%

6.2 Selection Process: A Selection Committee comprised of Manager of Communications and Legislative Affairs, CEO, Deputy Executive Director, Senior Digital Communications Strategist, Public Relations Specialist, and our Special Projects Manager will be used to evaluate submittals and select a Firm for this project.

After the public opening at 2:00 p.m. EST via Zoom on February 10, 2023, the Selection Committee will shortlist the SOQs by February 16 and will engage in individual discussions with all offerors deemed susceptible to award. At the conclusion of such discussions, the offerors will be ranked in order of preference based on the evaluation factors published in this SOQ and on all information obtained during the selection process. The final selection will be made on March 2, 2023, and will be made based upon qualifications. Once the selection is made, based upon a ranking process, and all applicants notified of the selection, negotiations may begin to define the scope of work and associated costs that will lead to a contract.

OKI shall thereafter attempt to finalize a contract with the offeror ranked first. If a contract, final scope and schedule satisfactory and advantageous to OKI can be negotiated for a price considered fair and reasonable, the award shall be made to such offeror; otherwise, negotiations with the offeror ranked first shall be formally terminated and negotiations conducted with the offeror ranked second, and so on, until a contract can be negotiated for a fair and reasonable price. Should OKI determine in its sole discretion that only one offeror is fully qualified, or that one offeror is clearly more highly qualified and suitable than the others under consideration, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror.

SECTION VII
CHECKLIST¹ AND ATTACHMENTS
FREIGHT PLAN COMMUNICATIONS

The following items must be included in your SOQ in order to receive consideration. Failure to complete all forms included in this package may result in your SOQ being ruled non-responsive. Non-responsive Statements of Qualifications (SOQ) will not be evaluated or considered for a contract award.

- Attachment #1 – Cover Sheet
- Approach to Project and Management of Sub(s) (maximum five pages)
- Attachment #2 – References/List of Relevant Work
- Attachment #3 – Conflict of Interest and Bribery Clause Statement
- Attachment #4 – DBE Certification
- Attachment #5 – Summary of DBE Proposed Work
- Attachment #6 – Certification Regarding Lobbying

¹This page is for information only and is not to be returned with the Statement of Qualification.

ATTACHMENT #1
COVER SHEET

By signing below, you are agreeing to all Terms & Conditions that are a part of this Request for Qualifications.

Include this page in your response to this RFQ.

Firm: _____

Authorized Signer: _____

Title: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Project Manager: _____

Title: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Date: _____

Federal ID Number: _____

Firm's DUNS Number: _____

If you do not have a DUNS number, contact Dun & Bradstreet at (866) 705-5711 or go to: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>.

(Cover Sheet continues to next page)

Non-collusion Statement: By my signature below, I, individually and as an agent for the Firm responding to this Statement of Qualifications, certify that neither I, nor the business entity for which I am an agent, nor any other agent for that business entity, have entered into any agreement, participated in any collusion, or otherwise taken any action, in restraint of free competitive bidding in connection with this submitted bid. I understand that failure to submit this statement as part of the bidding documents shall make this bid nonresponsive and therefore not eligible for award consideration.

Firm Signature

Date

Please include a copy of your W-9 with your submitted SOQ. You cannot be awarded a contract until this is submitted.

I acknowledge receipt of the following Addendum:

Addendum #1: _____

Addendum #2: _____

Addendum #3: _____

Any Additional Addendum (list all numbers): _____

Firm Signature (all items above have been read and completed)

ATTACHMENT #2
REFERENCES/LIST OF RELEVANT WORK

Please select your firm's three most relevant and recent examples.

Include this page in your response to this RFQ.

1.	Project:	
	Client:	
	Contact Name:	
	Phone Number:	
	E-Mail:	
	Description of Work Performed:	
2.	Project:	
	Client:	
	Contact Name:	
	Phone Number:	
	E-Mail:	
	Description of Work Performed:	
3.	Project:	
	Client:	
	Contact Name:	
	Phone Number:	
	E-Mail:	
	Description of Work Performed:	

ATTACHMENT #3
CONFLICT OF INTEREST and BRIBERY CLAUSE STATEMENT

Include this page in your response to this RFQ.

I. Conflict of Interest Statement.

Proposer shall provide a list of all entities and/or individuals with which it has relationships that create, or may appear to create, conflicts of interest with the work that is contemplated by this RFQ. The list should indicate the names of the entities and/or individuals, their relationship to the Proposer, and a description of the real and/or apparent conflicts. In addition, please be sure to include descriptions of relationships with any or all OKI board Members, elected officials, and employees that create, or may appear to create, any real and/or apparent conflicts of interest.

Please check appropriate box and include signature, title, and date at bottom of page.

- The Proposer has no Conflicts of Interest and confirms that this form is not applicable.
- The Proposer acknowledges the following real and/or apparent existing conflicts. Attach additional sheets, if necessary:

1.	Name:	
	Relationship to Proposer:	
	Description of Conflict:	
2.	Name:	
	Relationship to Proposer:	
	Description of Conflict:	
3.	Name:	
	Relationship to Proposer:	
	Description of Conflict:	
4.	Name:	
	Relationship to Proposer:	
	Description of Conflict:	
5.	Name:	
	Relationship to Proposer:	
	Description of Conflict:	

II. Bribery Clause Statement.

Furthermore, with his/hers/their signature to this Attachment #3 document, the Proposer certifies that no employee of his/hers/theirs, any affiliate or sub, has bribed or attempted to bribe an officer or employee of OKI.

Signature

Title

Date

ATTACHMENT #4
DBE CERTIFICATION

Include this page in your response to this RFQ.

Please check appropriate box and include this page in your response to this RFQ.

The Proposer does not have DBE certification.

The Proposer has DBE Certification.*

**Insert a copy of your DBE Certificate.*

Please check appropriate box and include this page in your response to this RFQ.

The Proposer's sub-consultant does not have DBE certification.

The Proposer's sub-consultant has DBE Certification.*

**Insert a copy of their DBE Certificate.*

ATTACHMENT #5
SUMMARY OF DBE PROPOSED WORK

Include this page in your response to this RFQ.

Please check appropriate box and include this page in your response to this RFQ.

The Proposer does not propose any DBE work and confirms this form is not applicable.

The Proposer proposes the following DBE work summary:

DBE Name	General Description of Proposed Work	Projected Percent of Work by DBE

ATTACHMENT #6

CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

APPENDIX A, 49 CFR PART 20 CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING³ Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

1. No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
2. If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for making lobbying contacts to an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form—LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,” in accordance with its instructions [as amended by “Government-wide Guidance for New Restrictions on Lobbying,” 61 Fed. Reg. 1413 (1/19/96). Note: Language in paragraph (2) herein has been modified in accordance with Section 10 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-65, to be codified at 2 U.S.C. 1601, *et seq.*)]
3. The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all sub-awards at all tiers (including subcontracts, sub-grants, contracts under grants, loans and cooperative agreements) and that all sub-recipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by 31 U.S.C. § 1352 (as amended by the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995). Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

[Note: Pursuant to 31 U.S.C. § 1352(c)(1)-(2)(A), any person who makes a prohibited expenditure or fails to file or amend a required certification or disclosure form shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such expenditure or failure.]

³The filing of Standard Form LLL (Rev. 7-97, OMB 0348-0046) and full disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. section 1352 for each instance described above, whether or not federal monies are used. The information requested through this certification is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance is placed by OKI when the transaction referred to in this solicitation is made or entered into.

The Proposer, _____, certifies or affirms the truthfulness and accuracy of each statement of its certification and disclosure, if any. In addition, the Proposer understands and agrees that the provisions of 31 U.S.C. A 3801, *et seq.*, apply to this certification and disclosure, if any.

Signature of Proposer's Authorized Official

Printed Name of Proposer's Authorized Official

Title of Proposer's Authorized Official

Date