



SCOPE OF WORK: PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM/CONSULTANT

Application Package Requested by
Tuesday, April 22, 2025
11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time

Background

The National Marine Sanctuary Foundation seeks a public relations agency or consultant to develop and support the Foundation's public relations and media efforts. Our selected partner will be responsible for carrying out media outreach campaigns at the direction of the Foundation Communications team, as outlined in the overall communications strategy, to build awareness of national marine sanctuaries and the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. The consultant or agency will proactively build relationships with key national and priority regional media outlets and help us identify, craft, and distribute impact stories of our work to relevant stakeholders (media, influencers, coalitions, and other audiences) to advance support for our work among key audiences and target markets. They will also provide strategic counsel and insight on messaging to reach key segments, including refining audiences. They will help us refine and develop our monitoring dashboard, identifying key metrics to report our progress.

Objectives

In an increasingly hostile environment for public lands and waters, our goal is to leverage sanctuary impact stories, programs and partnerships around the National Marine Sanctuary System to demonstrate the importance of sanctuaries and value of the Foundation to the American public in order to secure more resources for marine sanctuaries from decisionmakers.

We must focus on utilizing media and public relations to build bipartisan political influence and garner broader public support for sanctuaries as a national public investment akin to our national parks, utilizing publicity to pursue policy and fundraising goals.

- Ensure awareness, understanding, and support for the Foundation's work to protect the ocean and Great Lakes environment through national marine sanctuaries and marine national monuments – currently 18 sites coast to coast and in the Pacific region, with a diversity of ecosystems, marine heritage assets, and communities of stewards.
- Increase our share of voice, coverage, sentiment, and reach, by securing positive news and media coverage about the value of national marine sanctuaries to local communities and the national interest.
- With a highly distributed footprint, prioritize strategies around national topics that build bipartisan support in key markets.
- Elevate the Foundation as a thought leader for U.S. marine conservation and maritime heritage and Indigenous cultural preservation.

Scope of Work

- Message Strategy
 - Advise on our annual public relations strategy, refining and establishing objectives and audience segments in support of Foundation annual goals. In particular, we are looking to 1) craft messages in alignment and support of ONMS message priorities, 2) while also elevating the economic contribution of sanctuaries to coastal communities, 3) using impact stories of Foundation ONMS programs and initiatives that will demonstrate value to donors and decisionmakers.
- Develop Media Lists
 - Building on existing Foundation press lists and relationships, develop and refine comprehensive media contact lists for specified target media and markets.
 - Develop new relationships with priority reporters, journalists, and editors.
- Craft Media Pitches and Placements
 - Developing forward-thinking, targeted pitches designed to underscore organization's key messages, spotlight an initiative, or position a subject matter expert within the media – the Foundation has expertise in marine debris salvage, maritime heritage and preservation, and coral reef restoration, for example.
 - Counsel on potential targets for paid advertising strategies to elevate the Foundation story and increase impact.
- Press Releases and Media Alerts
 - Write and distribute press releases on key Foundation initiatives or stories, following up with pitching to top-tier strategic targets.
- Thought Leadership
 - Explore and pursue opportunities to share Foundation messaging through op-ed placement in key media outlets. This may include writing, editing, and pitching pieces for Foundation leadership or strategic partners.
- Media Training
 - Assist in prepping executives, senior staff and spokesperson for interviews with the media.
- Metrics and Reporting
 - Develop a dashboard of metrics to regularly evaluate the impact of PR campaigns and provide written biweekly reports to show status and/or results of work.

Expertise in influencing policy and connecting media to lawmakers is a requirement.

Potential Timelines / Deliverables

TIMELINE	DELIVERABLE/MILESTONE
May 1	Begin work / First biweekly meeting
May 7	Identify key markets and audiences
May 14	Refined messaging strategy document
May 21	Refined press lists based on markets/audiences



May 31	First story press release/pitch (Capitol Hill Ocean Week)
May 31	First op-ed pitch (Capitol Hill Ocean Week)
June 13	Media kit
June 30	Report on Q2 activities
July X	Foundation 25 th anniversary
Sept 30	Report on Q3 activities
Oct 23	National Marine Sanctuary Day
Dec 31	Report on 2025 activities

Budget Availability

The expected budget for this work is up to \$3,750 per month from April until December 2025. There is a possibility of extending work depending on future funding.

How to Apply

Application packages should be submitted by 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, April 22, 2025 via email to Chip Weiskotten, Director of Creative Strategy and Services at chip@marinesanctuary.org. Please use this email subject line when submitting your application: "RFP Response: Public Relations."

When responding to this request, please include the following in your response:

- Please provide a brief overview of the consultant or agency, including company size, locations, services provided in-house, and fee structure. Limit: 500 words
- Please provide two recent case studies that showcase your work with an organization or company relevant to our field.
- Which public relations KPIs matter most (generally speaking) for an organization like ours? Please describe your reporting style and cadence.
- Please provide a description of how you or the agency would approach the proposed scope of work, including a clear project timeline, deliverables, and milestones.
- Assume a budget of \$3,750 per month. How would your agency staff our account and how will you allocate resources within that constraint?
- Why would our organization be a good fit for your client roster? Limit: 100 words



- Please share 3 references and their contact information, along with 1 or 2 sentences providing some context on your work with them.

Decision timeline

Respondents can expect responses by Friday, April 25th. If you have questions, reach out to Chip Weiskotten at chip@marinesanctuary.org.