

URBAN GATEWAYS

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: MEDIA RELATIONS SUPPORT

Urban Gateways is a Chicago-based non-profit organization that engages young people in arts experiences to inspire creativity and impact social change. We provide arts experiences for over 80,000 young people in the Chicago area annually in partnership with 230 schools, libraries, parks, and community organizations. By connecting Chicago-area youth, their teachers, families, and communities with professional artists, we encourage self-expression as a vital component in creating inspired lives, vibrant environments, and lasting social change. Our programs include Artist Residencies, Touring Performances, Workshops & Professional Development, our new media center Street Level, and the newly launched Teen Arts Pass. We are seeking a consultant, boutique agency, or large-scale firm to help raise Urban Gateways' profile and position us as experts in arts education, creativity, and youth empowerment.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Urban Gateways is looking to increase its visibility to a number of different constituents including donors and funders, programmatic partners, and teens and young adults aged 13-24:

- donors and funders to drive donations to support the work and mission of Urban Gateways
- programmatic partners to increase the reach of our work
- and teens and young adults so that our mission can affect more and more youth throughout Chicagoland and beyond

We have a number of new initiatives including Teen Arts Pass and Street Level that are engaging a new constituent base (direct service for teens/youth ages 13-24) for the organization. Announcements about our programs, events, and related activities provide an excellent platform for generating publicity that can elevate Urban Gateways' public brand and, in turn, increase donations and grow our programs.

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Urban Gateways' goal with a media presence is to increase visibility/raise awareness. Our underlying assumption with this project is that increased visibility translates to higher earned revenues from our program partners as well as increased contributions from donors and funders. Our hope is to increase media impressions throughout Chicagoland and we anticipate working with a vendor that can help us navigate this and set specific benchmarks to measure our success.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected consultant/agency will be responsible for developing and executing a media relations strategy that identifies, develops and places stories in influential general interest and niche media and social media channels. Our primary interest is Chicagoland media.

We anticipate that activities would include:

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- Develop pitches and story angles
- Prepare and distribute press releases and other media-ready materials
- Build media contact lists and assist in forming long-term media relationships
- Arrange local media and top blogger/influencer coverage to promote our event and programs, including, but not limited to: television, radio, newspapers, magazines, online media and new media outlets. Looking to create “year-round” coverage of Urban Gateways activities and reach.
- Assess current sponsorship recognition opportunities and make recommendations for new ways to recognize support from sponsors/funders
- Pitch and arrange interviews and appearances
- Prep key spokespersons for interviews
- Assess current audience and donor base and make recommendations to expand and refine these groups
- Develop or suggest creative and engaging digital/social content to promote Urban Gateways as thought leaders
- Collaborate on social media marketing to support events and programs
- Monitor media coverage of events and programs including providing read-outs or flash reports of citywide non-profit activity that aligns to our mission

SELECTION CRITERIA / TIMELINE

The selected partner may have demonstrated expertise working with Chicago-based nonprofits. If no specific experience in this area then the selected partner will bring a creative edge to the project with a willingness to expand their reach into this market. Experience with organizations that focus on arts, arts education, and teen/youth engagement is preferred but also not required. The proposed services will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and compliance with the requirements of the RFP. The core judging criteria are:

1. Demonstrated expertise in and an understanding of Urban Gateways’ work (20%)
2. Understanding of and ability to meet our goals (40%)
3. Qualifications of key personnel, with weight given to experience in our areas of expertise (20%)
4. Ability to execute proposal within budget (20%)

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Your proposal should demonstrate how you would package and pitch Urban Gateways’ work and spokespersons. Submitted proposals can include information about your history, similar experience, your approach, and general ideas for this scope. This proposal will inform a short phone interview that will be scheduled with selected respondents allowing for a conversation about our needs and a chance for us to get to know you.

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BENEFITS OFFERED

Urban Gateways is looking for a consultant or agency to truly be a *partner* in crafting our media presence. We know our budget is limited and are happy to offer additional benefits including, but not limited to: mention of the consultant/agency on urbangateways.org and any materials you may work on (including award submissions, etc.); and access to our Board of Directors and possible meeting presentations. Our expertise is in providing arts experiences. As such, we want to give creative freedom in forming and executing a media relations strategy to the selected partner as long as we stay within the sphere of our mission to *inspire creativity and impact social change* for the young people of Chicago.

BUDGET & TERM OF CONTRACT

Term of contract is approximately February 15, 2019 through December 31, 2019. Your proposal should be based on a budget of \$5,000 inclusive of all fees and expenses through December 31, 2019. Preference given to discounted and pro-bono opportunities.

TO APPLY

Please submit all proposals by 4pm on Friday, January 25th to: Abby Prescott, Director of Communications at aprescott@urbangateways.org

LINKS

Website: <https://www.urbangateways.org>
<https://www.street-level.org>
<https://www.teenartspass.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UrbanGatewaysChicago/>
<https://www.facebook.com/UrbanGatewaysAssociateBoard/>
<https://www.facebook.com/streetlevelchicago/>
<https://www.facebook.com/TeenArtsPass/>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/urbangateways/>
<https://www.instagram.com/streetlevelchicago/>
<https://www.instagram.com/teenartspass/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/urbangateways>
https://twitter.com/street_level
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