

**MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
(MWDOC)**



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)
TO PROVIDE
STRATEGIC DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES**

RFP No. PA0423-001

Proposals Due: May 26, 2023, by 5:00 PM

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SECTION 1 – NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

1. Sealed proposals for RFP No. PA0423-001– Strategic Digital Communications Services, as described herein, will be received by the receptionist at Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) offices until **5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 26, 2023.**

Proposals shall be enclosed and sealed in an envelope marked **RFP NO. PA0423-001 on the outside of the envelope** and addressed to Municipal Water District of Orange County.

2. **Proposals may be delivered in one of the following methods:**

- a. **Hand delivered or via mail or common carrier (UPS, FedEx, etc.) to:**

Municipal Water District of Orange County
Attn: Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs
18700 Ward Street
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

- b. **Submitted in electronic form via email to:**

Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs at dmicalizzi@MWDOC.com
Submission must include the following subject line: **RFP NO. PA0423-001**

It is the Proposer's sole responsibility to ensure that their proposal, including any or all addenda, is received at the proper place by the deadline. Postmarks will not validate proposals that arrive after the deadline listed above. Any proposal received after the deadline will be returned to the Proposer unopened.

3. To facilitate the evaluation process, **three (3) printed copies of the proposal shall be provided, as well as an electronic copy on a flash drive** (using PDF format, with search capability, to ensure readability and compatibility). These materials will be retained by MWDOC.

SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

I. PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC) is seeking proposals from qualified firms (Proposers, Contractors) to provide strategic digital communications services and outreach on issues that affect MWDOC and its member agencies.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to solicit proposals from qualified Contractors with a proven track record in strategic digital outreach in Southern California **(from the current Contractor and other qualified firms)**. The selected Contractor will assist MWDOC in strategic digital initiatives, including developing online content, social targeting and listening, media monitoring, and video production services related to issues that may have a direct effect on MWDOC and or its member agencies, and develop and successfully pursue and implement its priorities.

The successful Contractor will be awarded a three-year contract with two consecutive options to renew for one additional year.

This RFP describes the District, the required scope of services, the contractor selection process, and the minimum information that must be included in the proposal. Failure to submit information in accordance with the RFP requirements and procedures may be cause for disqualification.

II. DISTRICT OVERVIEW

MWDOC is a regional wholesale water provider and resource planning agency whose efforts focus on sound planning and appropriate investments in water supply, water use efficiency, public information and outreach, legislative advocacy, emergency preparedness, and water education for all ages. Through these efforts, MWDOC serves all 3.2 million Orange County residents.

MWDOC's 27 retail water agencies, comprised of both city water departments and water districts, provide retail water services to the public.

Local water supplies meet approximately half of Orange County's total water demand. To meet the remaining demand, MWDOC purchases imported water – from Northern California and the Colorado River – through the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California. MWDOC delivers this water to its 27 member agencies across Orange County except for the cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, and Santa Ana. MWDOC is governed by an elected, seven-member Board of Directors. Additional information about MWDOC is available at www.mwdoc.com.

III. **PROJECT TIMELINE**

The following table identifies and estimates the dates/timeframe for receipt, evaluation, award, and implementation of this work. Please note these key dates when preparing your response to this RFP.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
Release of RFP to Vendors	April 21, 2023
Deadline for Written Questions Regarding RFP	May 17, 2023
Proposal Due Date	May 26, 2023
Proposal Review	May 29, 2023
Vendor Interviews (<i>Tentative, if needed</i>)	June 2-5, 2023
Vendor Selection (Board approval)	June 21, 2023
Contract Execution	July 1, 2023
Contract Duration	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2028

SECTION 3 – SCOPE OF WORK

STRATEGIC DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES

MWDOC seeks a firm with technical expertise to work with the District and provide a suite of strategic digital communications services that enhance and showcase MWDOC's programs and reflect the District's mission. The scope of work for such support services includes the following:

- Maintain and continue to improve the District's digital presence by developing targeted strategies to share MWDOC's key messaging through timely and relevant outreach channels to raise awareness, create a connection, educate on key actions, and drive traffic back to the District's website.
- Produce regular digital content for all the District's social media platforms through concept development, including quality graphic design and targeted hashtags. (MWDOC presently has social media accounts for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Pinterest.)
- Create messaging to promote audience interaction and generate interest through sharing relevant content such as events, news, programs, and milestone achievements.
- Assist District staff in developing digital content for special events, including promotions, onsite support, and event highlights.
- Maintain staff availability to respond to audience inquiries in a timely manner.
- Manage social media posting schedule and purchases of sponsored content as requested.
- Monitor, track, and analyze sentiment on social media related to water issues and the District and or its member agencies, as requested.
- Attend the District's Committee meetings, as requested.
- Prepare quarterly social media analytics reports and an annual audit.

SECTION 4 – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

I. PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

The emphasis of the proposal should be on responding to the requirements set forth herein. Proposers must demonstrate their capabilities, background, expertise, and experience for the District to effectively evaluate the proposals. The proposal should be concise, well organized, and demonstrate the Consultant's understanding of the project.

The proposal should be organized as follows. Please use the section headings and sub-headings listed in bold below.

1. **Proposal Contents** – Proposals shall contain the following specific information and be no longer than five pages (excluding resumes):
 - a. **Cover Letter** - The cover letter shall provide a summary of the services to be provided. The cover letter must be signed by an authorized officer or employee of the Contractor with the authority to negotiate and contractually bind the organization. The title of the authorized officer or employee, their name, address, e-mail, and phone number must be included. The District intends to correspond only with the respondent's authorized officer or employee for all correspondence regarding this RFP. Submitting accurate and updated contact information is the responsibility of the respondent. Obligations committed by such signatures shall be binding.
 - b. **Background Information**
 - i. Legal name, address, and telephone and fax numbers of the principal office and local office. If services will be provided from additional locations, provide this information for these sites also.
 - ii. Year established.
 - iii. Type of organization (partnership, corporation, etc.).
 - iv. Name, title, address, e-mail, and telephone number of the person to whom correspondence shall be directed.
 - v. Description of the scope of services usually provided.
 - vi. Description of any relevant pending litigation or litigation against the firm or any sub-consultants that was settled in the past three years.
 - c. **Organization**
 - i. Provide an organizational chart indicating names, job titles, functional roles, and responsibilities of proposed staff.
 - ii. Describe how the responding firm is organized to provide the required services.

- d. **Work Plan** – Submit a work plan for each task for carrying out the scope of services described in this RFP, including strategy, tools, techniques, critical path items, and decision points, which reflects an understanding of the District’s requirements. Assumptions, desired outcomes, and quantified deliverables must be included as part of your firm’s approach to each major task area.
 - e. **Project Team and Resumes** - Indicate the Project Team by name and title, i.e., the individual(s) assigned overall responsibility for performing the services, and identify the project manager. The project manager will serve as the main point of contact and should guarantee their availability. Provide a project team organizational chart indicating the primary role and responsibility of each team member. The proposal should clearly associate specific staff to work tasks and estimate the percentage of time they will dedicate to the project and their qualifications. Submit resumes for each identified individual, including prime personnel, and their key qualifications and experience, which makes them suited for their proposed assignment on the project. Every effort should be made to ensure that staff resources identified in the proposal will be available for the project in the event an agreement is awarded to your firm.
 - f. **Qualifications and Experience** – Describe the firm's qualifications for performing similar, relevant, or related services. Identify the team's experience working with elected officials, committees, and or similar agencies/entities with an emphasis on (but not limited to) those in Orange County. In addition, describe your specific experience with state water issues, including the Delta Conveyance Project, Infrastructure, Water Rates, Tax Issues, Conservation and Environmental Awareness, Educational Programs for youths and adults, and the ability to strategically target messages from various social platforms.
 - g. **Client References** - A list of three former clients and representative services undertaken in the last two (2) years, demonstrating experience relevant to this RFP. Provide a contact person’s name, title, address, phone number, and email address for each reference. Also, please provide a list of all services your firm has performed for the District in the past three (3) years, if applicable.
 - h. **Cost/Pricing Information - Cost/Pricing Information** - One of the areas on which you will be evaluated is your cost for performing the scope of services, including a prescription of measurable deliverables (e.g., posts, videos, engagement levels), without limitation, the cost for consulting services plus an estimated lump sum for travel and other direct expenses. The proposed price and cost basis for the price shall be stated as an hourly fee with a yearly cap for services.
2. **Acceptance of District Standard Consultant Agreement and Insurance Requirements** - Please note that the successful firm will be expected to execute the District’s Standard Consultant Agreement, provide evidence of the required insurance, and demonstrate that it has no Conflicts of Interest. A completed W9 form may also be required. These do not need to be attached to your firm’s proposal at this time. However, the proposal shall include a statement that you have reviewed the District’s Standard Consultant Agreement and the General Insurance Requirements; and, if

selected, your firm will execute said agreement; your firm and any sub-consultants will fulfill the insurance requirements; and your firm will provide the required insurance documents and the additional insured endorsements as specified.

Any questions as to the meaning of the scope of work, proposal requirements, or selection process must be submitted in writing and shall be directed to Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs, at dmicalizzi@mwdoc.com. To be given consideration, questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 24, 2023. All questions asked by Proposers and answers provided in response will be immediately posted to MWDOC's website at <http://www.mwdoc.com/business/rfp>.

Under no circumstances may the Proposer contact any other staff member or Board Member of MWDOC or its member agencies (or the cities of Anaheim, Fullerton, or Santa Ana) to discuss this RFP or clarify any requirements herein. Failure to comply with this requirement may be grounds for immediate disqualification.

II. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

1. To facilitate the evaluation process, **three (3) printed copies of the proposal shall be provided, as well as an electronic copy** (using PDF format, with search capability) **on a flash drive.**
2. The proposal shall be signed by an individual authorized to execute legal documents on behalf of the contractor.
3. Any changes or addenda to a submitted proposal must be received by the submittal deadline.

III. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. MWDOC and local water agencies may make such investigations as it deems necessary to determine the ability of the Proposer to provide the goods and or service as specified, and the Proposer shall furnish to MWDOC, upon request, all such information and data for this purpose. MWDOC may discuss or negotiate with one or more firms prior to award.
2. MWDOC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, either separately or as a whole, and accept any proposal presented that it deems best suited to the interest of MWDOC and its member agencies and is not bound to accept the lowest price.
3. The cost of developing the proposal is the sole responsibility of the Proposer. All proposals submitted become the property of MWDOC.
4. Be advised that all information contained in proposals submitted in response to this solicitation may be subject to the California Public Records Act (Government Code Section 6250 et seq.).

SECTION 5 – SELECTION PROCESS

I. PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS

1. An evaluation committee will review and score the proposals received in response to this RFP.
2. If deemed necessary by the evaluation committee, interviews with short-listed Consultants will be conducted on the week of May 22, 2023.
3. The evaluation committee will recommend one or more firms to fulfill the requirements of this RFP. The recommendation will be made to the MWDOC General Manager and Board of Directors.
4. Upon approval by the Board of Directors, MWDOC will enter into negotiations with the selected Consultant(s) and execute an agreement.

II. SELECTION CRITERIA

The criteria for vendor selection shall be based on, but not limited to, the following:

1. Qualifications and experience of firm and project manager
2. Understanding of the District, functions, and mission
3. Management Plan and approach to Scope of Work
4. Compliance with standard district terms and conditions and insurance requirements
5. Cost of services

EXHIBIT A –