



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Marketing and Communications

Issued by: RISE Together Innovation Institute

Release Date: March 30, 2026

Proposal Due Date: April 12, 2026

I. Introduction

RISE Together Innovation Institute (RTII) invites qualified vendors to submit proposals to provide marketing and communications strategy and implementation support.

This role is expected to function as RTII's primary marketing and communications lead, ensuring alignment between strategy, execution, and organizational priorities.

II. Purpose

RTII operates as an applied learning and innovation lab focused on advancing economic security and mobility in Franklin County. Through cross-sector collaboration and pilot investments, RTII supports initiatives aligned with the Rise Together Blueprint to Reduce Poverty.

As RTII grows, there is a need to:

- Clarify and align core messaging across initiatives and audiences
- Ensure consistency and coordination of communications
- Strengthen how work, impact, and learning are communicated
- Establish practical systems and processes to support ongoing communications
- Support execution of communications deliverables in the near term

The purpose of this RFP is to establish and execute a cohesive marketing, branding, and communications function for RTII, ensuring consistent, high-quality external communications, timely delivery of content and materials, and fulfillment of grant-related communications deliverables.

III. Priority Areas of Focus

RTII anticipates that the selected consultant will engage across the following areas. These are intended to provide direction while signaling the expectation that this role will serve as RTII's primary marketing and communications lead, responsible for both strategy and day-to-day execution.

These areas are intended to provide direction; respondents are encouraged to propose a clear approach, prioritization, and engagement model based on their experience serving in a lead communications role.

Strategy and Planning

- Develop and refine a marketing and communications strategy
- Align priority audiences, key messages, and communication channels
- Create and manage a communications plan, including cadence and content priorities
- Ensure communications align with RTII's strategic priorities, pilots, and grant deliverables

Execution and Communications Management

- Serve as RTII's primary point of contact for communications
- Lead day-to-day execution of communications
- Develop content (e.g., newsletters, blog posts, website content, reports)
- Manage social media, including planning, posting, and tracking
- Provide graphic design support for communications materials
- Maintain and update website content
- Support light video or multimedia content, as needed

Branding and Messaging

- Continue development and refinement of RTII's brand
- Develop or refine messaging frameworks and style guidelines
- Ensure consistency across all communications



Systems and Processes

- Develop communications policies and guidelines (e.g., social media, blog content)
- Create and manage a communications calendar
- Develop templates and tools to support consistent execution
- Establish simple, sustainable systems for internal coordination

Measurement and Evaluation

- Develop metrics and key performance indicators
- Track performance and provide recommendations for improvement

IV. Timeline

Estimated project duration: 6-12 months

RTII anticipates a phased approach, with an initial focus on strategy and alignment, alongside ongoing implementation support.

The following deliverables will have a deadline of June 30, 2026:

- Renew website and social media pages
- Develop metrics to evaluate the success of communications strategies

Respondents should propose a timeline and level of effort aligned with this approach.

V. Budget

Proposals should include:

- Total cost and pricing structure (e.g., fixed fee, monthly retainer, hourly, or phased)
- Payment milestones tied to defined deliverables or phases

VI. Desired Qualifications

RTII seeks a partner with:

- Experience developing and implementing marketing and communications strategies
- Demonstrated ability to execute communications deliverables independently with minimal oversight
- Experience serving as a lead or primary communications function for an organization (in-house or as a consultant)
- Experience working with nonprofit, public sector, or mission-driven organizations
- Strong ability to translate complex work into clear, accessible messaging



- Experience with content development, digital communications, and design
- Proficiency in graphic design tools (e.g., Canva, Adobe, or similar) and website/social media platforms
- Strong project management skills, including the ability to manage multiple communications streams and deadlines
- Ability to design practical, sustainable communications systems that staff can maintain over time

VII. Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include:

1. Cover Letter
2. Organizational Background and Relevant Experience
3. Proposed Approach
4. Work Plan and Timeline
5. Staffing Plan and Key Personnel
6. Budget and Pricing Structure
7. Examples of Similar Work

Suggested length: 6-10 pages (excluding examples of similar work)

VIII. Submission Instructions & Engagement Timeline

Submission Instructions:

Proposal must be submitted electronically in PDF format to info@rtiico.org with the subject line: **Marketing and Communications RFP**

Any questions must be submitted to info@rtiico.org by **11:59 pm on Apr 5, 2026** with the subject line: **Marketing and Communications RFP questions**

Proposal Deadline: **11:59 pm on April 12, 2026** (late proposals will not be accepted)

Proposal Release Date	March 30, 2026
Q & A Period	March 30 - April 5, 2026
Responses Shared to all Questions	April 6, 2026
Proposal Deadline	April 12, 2026
Interviews with Finalists	Week of April 20 th
Vendor Selection	April 24, 2026
Project Kickoff	Late April / early May 2026



IX. Scoring Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using the following scoring framework:

Criteria	Description	Total Points
Alignment	Alignment with project scope and deliverables	5
Overall approach	Demonstrated expertise, methodology, and work plan	5
Local presence / community economic impact	Demonstrated local business presence and contribution to local economic opportunity	2.5
Experience	Relevant examples of similar deliverables / work	5
Budget / Cost Effectiveness	Overall alignment to budget and value delivery	5
Community responsiveness and accessibility	Ability to engage intended communities, reduce barriers to access, and deliver services in an accessible and culturally responsive manner	2.5

Total possible points: 25

X. Rights Reserved

RISE Together Innovation Institute (RTII) reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Request additional information or clarification from proposers
- Negotiate with one or more proposers
- Award a contract in whole or in part

RTII will make reasonable efforts to solicit qualified local businesses and may apply a local business preference as part of best-value evaluation. Local preference will not supersede funder requirements, competition requirements, or the obligation to select the proposal that offers the best overall value to the organization.

RTII seeks competitive proposals that reflect the best value for the services requested. Proposers must submit a detailed cost proposal by lot, including fixed fees, hourly rates, assumptions, and any optional or implementation-related costs. RTII reserves the right to negotiate final scope, staffing, and price, to reject proposals deemed not cost-reasonable or outside available funding, and to make one or more awards in its best interest.



The work of RTII is made possible through the generous support of the Franklin County Board of Commissioners and their commitment to advancing the Rise Together Blueprint to Reduce Poverty.

