

Response to Questions

Public Relations Request for Proposals

August 23, 2024

1. Can you share the range of annual resources allocated to support this initiative? Feel free to reference the provided ranges. While we understand it is incumbent on our team to share thinking and ideas that deliver on your challenge, understanding the range of resources dedicated, at a high level, is crucial to providing thinking that will both be exciting to your team and deliver results.

We anticipate the annual budget for services procured under this RFP will be up to \$1,000,000.

2. Who do you see as your “competitors” in the public sector innovation field (whether at a university, external organizations)? Related, who do you consider as aspirational peers?

As a young organization, we are working diligently to build our brand so that we are seen as the world leading organization supporting mayors and city leaders as they look to transform their ways of working through research, grant support and technical assistance. We admire academic think tanks, institutions, Centers serving similar audiences, as well as non-profit organizations supporting government organizations. Importantly, we also admire organizations like NESTA, who over the years were often viewed as a leading voice in public innovation research, a body of work that is quickly growing under our JHU banner.

3. Is the Center currently or has it in the past worked with PR or marketing agencies to increase the public profile of the Center, Center leadership, and programs under the Center’s management?

No.

4. What inspired the Center to issue a public relations RFP at this time?

As a young organization, we have spent the last three years establishing our portfolio of work and team. Now serving more than 200 cities with a broader network of more than 700 cities, the Center has an important opportunity to leverage our already strong identity and

hone it quickly to advance to the next stage and position ourselves as the global leader in public innovation.

5. In several instances, the RFP mentions the need to “quickly” advance the position and profile of the Center, its work and support for cities, and the profile of the Executive director. Is there an upcoming announcement or event that necessitates particular urgency?

Yes. The Center is launching a new curriculum which is extremely significant in the field of public innovation. The Center will also conclude several programs. As those programs end, the Center wishes to feature the work of the cities in those programs widely. The upcoming election also offers an important opportunity for the Center’s voice.

6. How large is the current Center communications team?

In addition to a communications director, there are four staff positions that support content and design, which includes support for program delivery.

7. What is the relationship between the Center’s communications team and the larger communications team at the University?

We engage with the Central Communications team for approvals, alignment, and amplification, when appropriate.

8. How engaged is the Bloomberg Philanthropies communications team with the Center’s activities?

We maintain a high degree of collaboration with our partner, and their involvement is determined by the content and context of particular communications activities.

9. What have been the most successful PR/communications efforts since the Center’s inception?

While the Center’s launch announcement and the announcement of the 2024 Love Your Block program grant winners could be noted as our most successful to date, we are looking to expand the frequency, nature, and reach of announcements that we do and the nature of our voice.

10. How do you currently catalog and disseminate stories of impact?

The Center's website and social media are the primary dissemination tools. We also team with JHU and Bloomberg Philanthropies for amplification, which has been fruitful. Across our diverse programming, there are various cloud-based resources for cataloging storytelling opportunities.

11. How does the Center communicate with cities to stay apprised of the day-to-day impacts of programs under the Center's management?

Regularly-scheduled calls with city teams are part of routine technical assistance delivery and program management.

12. How do you envision the selected vendor for this project working with local city communications teams?

As necessary to deliver against the comprehensive external strategic communications plan.

13. What is the Center's current relationship with media (local / regional / national / trade)?

We are looking for a PR firm to build our relationships with media globally.

14. With which journalists/outlets does the Center already have good/existing relationships?

We are looking for a PR firm to build our relationships with media globally.

15. In addition to Executive Director Amanda Daflos, are there senior leaders or staff that will be part of communications/thought leadership campaigns?

Over time, select Center leadership and staff core to the Center's network of program participants and partners (such as City Innovation Officers) will potentially be featured in relation to programs and research.

16. What level of media experience do these senior leaders/staff have?

Several leaders have previously served as city officials where media engagement can be high.

17. For budget/staffing purposes, how many people need media training? Are the trainings expected to be on-campus/in-person or via Zoom, or either/or option? We see "training" as separate from prepping for a separate interview.

We look forward to determining this with the selected vendor.

18. What role (if any) will the Center and Executive Director Amanda Daflos play at Bloomberg CityLab in Mexico City this October?

The Executive Director will be in attendance and may have a speaking role. The Center is a partner in certain features of the event.

19. Will you please clarify the RFP submission deadline? The timeline on page 5 and page 8 of the RFP states that proposals are due by 4:00 PM EDT on September 13, 2024. Page 13 of the RFP reads “Proposals will be accepted by Johns Hopkins until 5:00 p.m. EDT on August 29, 2024.”

The deadline for proposal submissions is 5:00 p.m. ET on September 13, 2024.

20. What is the “first deliverable” expected, that is listed in the RFP timeline as due on December 15, 2024?

First draft of the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. That said, we are also looking to accomplish quick wins prior to the first deliverable and would look forward to coordinating opportunities with the selected vendor.

21. Per the SOW, if chosen, the agency will be expected to, “Develop comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy for BCPI” as well as “general organizational messaging”: Does the Center currently have a strategic business plan that the chosen agency can build a communications strategy from/around?

Yes, the Center has several guiding documents that could be leveraged.

22. Is there existing messaging, or is the selected agency expected to develop?

Agency is expected to review our past work and develop an entirely new perspective.

23. Per the SOW, the selected agency would “Support the development and dissemination, and on-site coordination of press releases and public announcements with BCPI and BP lead executives.” Roughly how many press releases / on-site public announcements does the Center anticipate over the course of the engagement?

Frequency and volume of press releases and on-site public announcements will be guided by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

24. Could you share a sense of how much writing of press releases would be expected from the selected agency (i.e., wholesale development and drafting, or more editing existing materials?)

The agency is expected to develop.

25. What role does the Bloomberg Philanthropies communications team play in developing and approving press releases?

Partner involvement is determined by the content and context of the press release.

26. How does the Center currently handle on-site public announcements (e.g., University events team leads, with Center support)?

We have not hosted any on-site announcements to-date and look forward to working with the selected agency to develop an approach.

27. How does the Center envision the agency's role in organizing on-sites?

Support the development and dissemination, and on-site coordination of press releases and public announcements with BCPI, city, and partner executives including engaging and bringing in reporters into story opportunities and in-person coverage opportunities as needed.

28. What role does Bloomberg Philanthropies communications and/or events teams play in coordination of on-sites?

Partner involvement is determined by the content and context of on-sites.

29. Does the Center already engage/use monitoring tools (social media monitoring, news clipping, etc.)?

Yes.

30. Will the selected agency be responsible for media monitoring and clip reports? If yes, at what cadence (e.g., daily or weekly)?

Yes. Cadence TBD.

31. Would the selected firm have access to current measurement tools or would the firm be expected to pay for the subscription to the preferred tool?

Yes.

32. Re: monthly and quarterly reporting: Are there preferred formats and/or tools the Center prefers for monthly reporting and/or metrics?

No. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine an approach that aligns to the needs of the organization.

33. Would the quarterly strategic/creative sessions be in-person and with whom (e.g., Center comms and Executive Director, or larger group of leadership)?

In person meetings are preferred; attendance may vary as appropriate for the content and context.

34. Regarding the short-term wins within the first six months outlined on p. 6 and 7 of the RFP: Re: op-eds: Is the Center looking for national-placement only, or will a mix of national, trade and/or local media (e.g., hometown newspapers of partner cities) be acceptable?

We welcome op-ed placements in a mix of global, national, and local coverage in support of a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

35. For budget and staffing purposes, how much of the writing of bylines/op-eds and other thought leadership-related content would be expected from the selected agency (e.g., from drafts through final? Perhaps writing #X, editing #Y)?

The agency is responsible for op-ed content development. Some support may be made available from BCPI communications staff.

36. Related, will the Center be the sole author of the byline(s) or will partners be involved?

We may welcome some co-authored items if they are in support of a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

37. Re: placement of 3 articles: Similar to the bylines, is the Center open to a mix of national, trade and/or local media coverage for cities within its portfolio?

We welcome article placements in a mix of global, national, and local coverage in support of a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

38. How does the Center currently handle sharing updates/stories from cities with their local media?

Toolkits, direct outreach, and (selectively) custom content development to support cities and their communications leaders.

39. Re: speaking events/engagements: How does the Center define “high-profile” speaking events/engagements?

Events and speaking opportunities with significant audience, reach, and cultural/industry impact both within the Center’s existing network and to a new audience as the Center is looking to expand our footprint and the reach of our narrative more widely in order to showcase public innovation to a broader, global network.

40. Do the four secured event/speaking engagements need to take place in the first six months, or can they be long-lead opportunities that are secured within that timeframe but actual event takes place at a later date?

Four high profile event/speaking engagements for the Executive Director should be generated in the first period. We expect that some appearances may fall within the period and others may be secured but take place at a later date.

41. Is there currently a calendar of speaking events/engagements the Executive Director or others are scheduled to speak at?

Yes, however we look forward to quickly working with the selected firm to defining a more robust and expansive calendar.

42. At what other conferences or convenings does the Center already have plans to participate in 2024 and 2025?

2024 will include Festlbo, ICMA Conference, CityLab. Other events are not yet defined. 2025 is not defined and we are looking forward to working with the selected vendor to strategically build a calendar of events.

43. Re: boards: Does Executive Director Amanda Daflos currently serve on any executive boards? If so, which?

She has served on boards in the past but is not active on a formal board at this time.

44. Is there a “wish list” of boards and/or types or industries that should be targets?

Yes.

45. Do you expect any media announcements or events during the first six months of this engagement?

Yes.

46. Will you have any in-person event staffing needs during the contract period?

Yes.

47. Beyond the desire to increase visibility and impact, are there any specific upcoming events, initiatives, or challenges that make this RFP particularly timely?

Please see Question 5.

48. Beyond the initial six months, what key performance indicators will be used to evaluate the long-term success of the PR and communications efforts?

The selected vendor will be expected to bring their expertise and creativity to the partnership and expand upon and refine the stated goals and expected deliverables, including the development of KPIs for impact measures.

49. How does the Center currently communicate with its internal stakeholders (faculty, staff, students) about its activities and achievements? Are there any specific communication needs or challenges within the university community?

While internal communications is currently not a part of this RFP, BCPI will benefit from the strengthening and sharpening of BCPI messaging and position in the field.

50. How does the Center envision the selected agency supporting its engagement with key stakeholders beyond media and city partners (e.g., funders, potential collaborators, the general public)?

Our engagement will benefit from the strengthening and sharpening of BCPI messaging and position in the field. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine the best approach.

51. Does the Center have an existing strategic business plan or any brand guidelines that the agency can reference when developing the communication strategy and messaging?

The Center has brand guidelines and several other guiding documents.

52. Does the Center have any preferred formats or tools for monthly reporting and metrics tracking? If so, please share those details.

We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

53. What Content Management System (CMS) is currently used for the BCPI website and other web properties?

Wordpress, Drupal, and related third-party tools.

54. Beyond brand alignment, are there any specific changes or improvements you'd like to see on the website (e.g., improved user experience, enhanced functionality, specific content updates)?"

Yes. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes website improvements as we anticipate restructuring the Center website in the next six months.

55. Could you please elaborate on your current SEO efforts, if any, and your expectations for ongoing SEO support and monitoring after the initial website update?

Low to moderate effort with a desire to expand. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes ongoing support.

56. What does success look like to you?

We look forward to the selected firm assisting us in elevating the BCPI brand so that it is recognized as the foremost brand in the field of public innovation with both the Executive Director and the Center publically positioned to represent public innovation and the work of the Center, cities and mayors at a global scale. Additionally, we look forward to working with the selected firm to set and meet goals and milestones and measure progress in alignment with a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy developed by the selected partner.

57. What are the key challenges facing BCPI as it continues to scale its operations and impact?

The Center and its portfolio of cities have expanded rapidly. The increasing volume of impact stories points towards the need for a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy and we look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

58. Do you feel prepared for internal/external crises that BCPI might face as you become more publicly known? If yes, would it be part of this scope?

Yes, we are aware that our environment will shift as we become more well known. As such, crisis and unscheduled opportunity response support are welcomed parts of a comprehensive external strategic communications plan. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes specific support in this regard.

59. Do you have peers/competitors or other leaders in this space that you think BCPI could emulate?

Please see Question 2.

60. Do you have established relationships with specific media outlets or influencers that we should leverage or prioritize building new ones?

Agencies should prioritize building new relationships.

61. Can you clarify what you mean by editorials (#8)?

Position pieces and participation in active cultural/industry conversations.

62. Have you been story-banking specific stories or case studies from BCPI's work with cities that you would like to highlight more prominently?

Yes, we have a very significant number of stories and case studies to leverage.

63. Are there specific themes or topics you want to focus on for the ED's thought leadership content in the first 6 months of the engagement?

Public innovation, as defined by the Center; specific features of Center programs, case studies, impact stories from cities engaged in BCPI's portfolio of work; and the Center's growing work profile.

64. Can you be more specific on expectations for adapting the BCPI website and brand identity (#10)? Does it include copywriting support, coding, and/or design work – or does BCPI have an internal team in place to lead this work with our consultation?

Supplemental resourcing may be required depending on the scale of work proposed. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes adapting the BCPI website.

65. Are you currently measuring and monitoring your social media metrics and coverage? If so, what tools are you currently using?

Yes, and we have access to a suite of industry-standing social media tools. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a modified approach as needed.

66. For social media, do you currently have a program in place for BCPI team members amplify and share BCPI social media posts and content?

We do not have a formal staff amplification program however we do encourage staff to amplify. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

67. Can you share the budget you have in mind for this work? We work on a retainer basis.

Please see Question 1.

68. We did have one question regarding budget—can you provide a budget range so that we can provide you with an appropriate scope of recommended activities?

Please see Question 1.

69. Why is the RFP being issued now?

Please see Question 4.

70. Has the external comms work to date been supported only by internal resources or have you used any outside partners for areas of the work?

Supported primarily by internal resources.

71. How would you prioritize the areas of focus (outlined in the RFP)? By percentage?

Relative priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

72. Thank you for sharing the evaluation criteria categories. Are the areas weighted equally or is greater emphasis placed on some?

We look forward to reviewing proposals with a focus on securing a firm that understands our current position and is excited and prepared to leverage our vast network and family of brands – BCPI, Johns Hopkins and Bloomberg Philanthropies, Cities of Service – and the reputation of our Executive Director to help position the Center as the world leader.

73. If we're selected to present in the final round, would it be possible to have a call with you a week or two before the presentation to ensure alignment on strategy and direction?

We welcome a brief call in advance of finalist interviews.

74. When, in terms of a date, would you like to start to see or feel the benefits of implementing this new solution?

Vendors should expect to focus on quickly building and executing upon a long-term strategy while also securing short-term media placements within the first six months so that the Center and Executive Director voice is increasingly and more prominently positioned.

75. The timeline in the RFP lists Sept. 13 as the due date for proposals but the final section (XIII Delivery) lists Aug. 29 as the deadline. Please confirm the Sept. 13 date.

Please see Question 19.

76. Who would you describe as your target audience? Public at large? Specific segments? Partners?

Target audience will be determined in relation to the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

77. Do you have personas or existing audience insights?

We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

78. What weight would you put on U.S. vs. global audiences? Priority global markets?

Regional priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We are a global Center.

79. Who do you consider your primary competitors? What about allies in the space (might be addressed in previous question as partners)?

Please see Question 2.

80. What differentiates you from these organizations?

We are the first organization of our kind, wholly focused on supporting cities in the field of public innovation with a specific focus on marrying cutting-edge practice and program with world-class research.

81. Since 2021 what has been the success rate of media placements and frequency of op/eds, articles?

BCPI has not pursued media placements to-date. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

82. What is the current level of direct engagement with city mayors/local council board members/state representatives?

Mayors and city managers are key stakeholders in BCPI grant programs.

83. Does BCPI actively monitor local/state/federal legislation and conduct advocacy campaigns in support of legislation?

No.

84. What is the current level of engagement with the BCPI website?

We see increased engagement around particular areas of interest to cities and other external entities like program announcements or specific releases.

85. We understand the Center's work is domestic and global. What is the percentage of focus your agency team would have on supporting the work outside the US? And if so, what global markets/regions would you prioritize?

Priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We are a global Center.

86. Can you provide a list of priority cities in the US where you're looking to achieve earned media coverage?

Priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

87. Do you have a sense of the priority programs that will be the focus for Q4 of 24 and throughout 2025?

Yes. We also expect some new programs may emerge organically and in response to the demographic we serve (e.g., COVID-19, Infrastructure Law, etc.). Refer to <https://publicinnovation.jhu.edu> for publicly available information on our programs and recent announcements.

88. What is the expected frequency for content creation for social?

Social content frequency will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

89. What is the existing source of content for social media and the website?

Content is primarily BCPI-generated.

90. Will the agency handle social media management, including posting, monitoring, reporting?

Supplemental resourcing may be required depending on the scale of work. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes social media management. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

91. We see there are three channels linked from the Center main website, would all three be part of the scope for developing content?

Yes.

92. Has the Center done any influencer engagement work to date?

No. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

93. How many toolkits do you anticipate needing per year? Is it based on key initiatives, announcements, milestones, etc.?

It is based on key initiatives, announcements, milestones, etc.

94. Will you need support in creating multimedia assets (e.g., graphic design, video production, etc.)?

Yes.

95. For brand alignment on the website, does this include management of the website and content development?

Supplemental resourcing may be required depending on the scale of work. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes website management and content development.

96. Are there existing brand guidelines used for BCPI?

Yes.

97. Do you have established benchmarks for PR/communications programs?

No. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

98. Do you have any research or established messaging from the past six to 12 months you would be willing to share with us at this stage?

Please refer to past public announcements for programs like Youth Climate Action Fund, Love Your Block, Bloomberg American Sustainable Cities Program, etc. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

99. We understand the desire to elevate the Executive Director, Amanda Daflos. Are there other leaders within the org we should also consider to broaden the bench of thought leaders?

Please see Question 15.

100. We understand there is an appetite to secure a board seat for Amanda within the first six months, however, in our experience such efforts take a minimum of 12 months. Is timing flexible?

This RFP is currently a one-year contract, and board placement is included as a deliverable. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

101. The RFP notes the placement of op-eds. Does Amanda have an in-house writer or is the agency responsible for op-ed content development?

The agency is responsible for op-ed content development. Some support may be provided by BCPI staff. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

102. The Deliverables section notes three op-ed placements in “leading publications,” can you provide further specificity? Global daily publications?

National and global news institutions with significant audience, reach, and cultural/industry impact.

103. Would you consider podcasts for the thought leadership effort? We see the deliverables are largely focused on print, online and speaking opportunities.

We welcome podcasts as part of the thought leadership platform if they are in support of the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

104. You mention the desire for a team with strong DC-Baltimore media knowledge and contacts. Do you have a geographical preference otherwise for where your agency team is located?

No.

105. How will you view success with your agency partner, beyond the outlined deliverables?

See previous questions related to success. The selected vendor will be expected to bring their expertise and creativity to the partnership and expand upon and refine the stated goals and expected deliverables.

106. What do you most value in an agency partnership?

Expertise, creativity, and the ability to produce outcomes in alignment with the stated goals of our organization for work related to this RFP.

107. Are there aspects about [AGENCY] that you think we should lean in to throughout this journey with you?

Expertise, creativity, and the ability to produce outcomes in alignment with the stated goals of our organization for work related to this RFP.

108. Are there any initial questions or concerns about [AGENCY], our approach, size or experience that we can help answer at this stage?

We look forward to understanding the qualifications, experience, proposed approach, and associated timelines for all responding vendors in alignment with the stated objectives for this RFP.

109. We understand you'd like us to provide a proposed fee structure for the stated scope. Is there any range, even broad, you'd be willing to share to ensure we build programming accordingly?

Please see Question 1.

110. Can you elaborate on the existing relationship between BCPI, Bloomberg Philanthropies and John Hopkins university. How should the selected agency collaborate across the organizations and what are the reporting structures?

BCPI is housed under the Office of the Provost at Johns Hopkins University and will soon transition to be a prominent part of the university's forthcoming School of Government and Policy. The Center serves as the permanent home for several flagship Bloomberg Philanthropies government innovation programs. The agency will be working directly for and in direct support of BCPI.

111. Is the scope of work for the U.S. only, or does it encompass international markets?

We are a global Center with work taking place in more than 200 global cities. As such, the scope of this work is anticipated to be global. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

112. What are 3 markets where BCPI would like to establish its presence?

Market priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

113. Who will be the designated point of contact for the selected agency at BCPI?

The Executive Director and a designated director.

114. Could you provide a recommended breakdown of the budget allocation for different aspects of the PR initiative, such as media relations, content creation, event planning, and social media management?

Please see Question 1.

115. Have you previously retained an external agency for similar work? What were their strengths and weaknesses?

No.

116. The RFP presents two deadlines for proposal submissions. It states that proposals will be accepted by John Hopkins until 5pm ET on August 29th and RFP timeline also lists a 4pm ET September 13th deadline submission. What is the final deadline for proposal submissions?

Please see Question 19.

117. Is a mailed copy of the proposal required in addition to the electronic submission?

No.

118. What are the top obstacles you see potentially hindering the success of this PR initiative?

BCPI and our partners are committed to this PR initiative. We do not anticipate obstacles hindering our success as this is among the highest priorities for the Executive Director, funders, key partners, and cities.

119. From BCPI's perspective, what is an initiative or program that has yet to be highlighted utilizing integrated communications?

All programs and the volume of impact stories we have collected.

120. Are there existing perceptions of BCPI that you would like the selected agency to help address or shift?

No. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach to amplifying our brand.

121. What would be the title of a 2026 BCPI Impact Report to capture what you hope to achieve in the next year?

- 1) BCPI achieves milestone of reaching 1 billion lives worldwide.
- 2) BCPI changes the global understanding of what it means to innovate in government and why it matters now more than ever.

122. In addition to the Executive Director, are there other identified spokespeople within BCPI or affiliated with its programs the agency should leverage or promote?

Other leaders may be engaged in support of the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

123. Will your communications partner have access to program alumni and current member Cities as potential case studies or spokespeople?

Yes.

124. What are the key drivers of enrollment in BCPI programs?

Current campaigns include press releases, email newsletters, and social media.

125. In the RFP, there is mention of 12 programs currently. Is there consideration to launching additional ones in the future?

Yes.

126. Which publications/media outlets do BCPI leadership rely on for daily news and information in the sector?

There is not a set list.

127. What is BCPI's dream media placements, both within and outside the public sector/civic space?

National and global news institutions with significant audience, reach, and cultural/industry impact.

128. What does BCPI's current newsroom infrastructure look like?

Please see Question 6.

129. Do you have existing press lists, media monitoring tools, or internal communication channels for disseminating news and updates?

No.

130. What does impactful social media look like to BCPI?

Social media KPIs will be determined in relation to the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

131. To what degree should we include events and speakerships as a part of our media strategy?

The relative importance of events and speakerships will be determined in relation to the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that prominently includes events and speakerships.

132. How far in advance is the Executive Director's currently booked for with speaking engagements or public events?

We are currently finalizing the end of the 2024 calendar and shaping 2025. We look forward to working with the selected firm to shape and finalize calendars.

133. What has been your experience with Podcast, Podcast series or YouTube to highlight impact stories for brand awareness and expansion?

The Executive Director has been a guest on several podcast series. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

134. What metrics will be used to measure the impact of PR work?

The selected vendor will be expected to bring their expertise and creativity to the partnership and expand upon and refine the stated goals and expected deliverables, including the development of KPIs for impact measures.

135. How does BCPI currently measure the success of its social media efforts? What metrics are most important to track?

We currently track followers, posts, engagement, and total impressions. We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

136. How will success be measured beyond the six-month mark?

Please see Question 48.

137. What does BCPI envision as success for thought leadership, brand awareness and stakeholder engagement?

The selected vendor will be expected to bring their expertise and creativity to the partnership and expand upon and refine the stated goals and expected deliverables, including the development of KPIs for thought leadership, brand awareness, and stakeholder engagement.

138. Are there any “non-traditional” KPI’s that BCPI uses to track impact of its programs or communications efforts?

BCPI has a robust set of programmatic metrics aimed at assisting the Center in better understanding the impact of our work and allowing us to build out our base of research and knowledge in the public innovation domain.

139. Are there any executives for whom you will want the development of an executive comms plan beyond the ED?

No.

140. For monitoring, is there a subset of cities you will want the firm to monitor, or will the expectation be that they will monitor across the 200 main (or all 700) cities?

We anticipate that we will have a strategic list of cities that we would want to monitor closely.

141. Would the vendor be responsible for running the Center’s and the ED’s social media accounts on a day-to-day basis?

Supplemental resourcing may be required depending on the scale of work proposed. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes day-to-day management.

142. Can you elaborate on the web development requirements for the vendor? Will they be making suggestions on alignment, or overhauling or actively managing the website?

Supplemental resourcing may be required depending on the scale of work proposed. If this is a strength of your agency, we welcome a proposal that includes website development.

143. You mentioned global media relationships as being an attribute of the successful bidder. Do you have any priority global markets among the cities or countries where you work?

Market priorities will be determined by the comprehensive external strategic communications plan. We are a global center.

144. Do you have a current messaging architecture and engagement plan against which you are executing?

We look forward to working with the selected firm to determine a clear approach.

145. Is there any flexibility to adjust the timeline for the first six months of deliverables, or are they set in stone?

We welcome delivery timelines that best support the development and execution of a comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy and allow BCPI to achieve quick wins and outcomes in line with the objectives stated in the RFP.

146. Does BCPI have a budget for event sponsorships, etc, which we have found are sometimes necessary to secure high-profile speaking opportunities?

Funds may be available for this purpose to support the comprehensive external strategic communications plan and media strategy.

147. Do you have in mind an overall budget range or ceiling?

Please see Question 1.

148. Can you share more detail on the priority focus for media outreach? Is BCPI and its Executive Director the focus, or supporting the local initiatives/organizations?

Advancing the positioning and profile of the Center, its work and support for cities, and the profile of the Executive Director.

149. Are there key markets beyond Baltimore/Washington, D.C. that are priorities?

We are a global Center working in more than 200 cities around the world. We anticipate that the priorities will be determined through the development of the comprehensive external strategic communications plan.

150. You outline a timeline for results in the first six months. Is there flexibility in the timing for how the executions are implemented?

Please see Question 145.

151. Are there any current milestones in 2024 or Q1 of 2025 that are already locked in or accounted for that we would want to consider for media engagement or executive visibility?

Yes. The Center will release a new consequential curriculum in the fall of 2024. Additionally, the Center will release new case studies and programs. There are several speaking opportunities aligned for the Executive Director.

152. Can you share any key ways of working you expect from your Communications partner?

We expect our communications partner to be highly professional, creative, cutting edge, collaborative, and results oriented. We look forward to working with a partner that demonstrates impact against planned goals and objectives.

153. Beyond the initiative short-term KPIs, can you share any longer term KPIs for your new partner?

Please see Question 48.

154. Are you able to share an estimated range for annual resources dedicated to this initiative? This is crucial to our ability to put forward a proposal that will both be exciting to the BCPI team and deliver results.

Please see Question 1.

155. Was [AGENCY] invited to this opportunity through our work with [ENTITY]?

BCPI was not engaged in this opportunity and has no knowledge of it.

156. Can you share the number of agencies to this RFP? How many do you intend to bring forward to finalist interviews?

This is an open RFP. There is no set number of finalists.