



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
RFP 24-04 Marketing Assessment & Strategic Plan
Posted October 11, 2024

Q1. Has Workforce Solutions Coastal Bend (WFSCB) ever conducted a marketing assessment before?

A1. No, we have not. We have done it in the realm of IT. When everyone went to work remotely during the pandemic, The Texas Workforce Commission realized that the Workforce Boards were lacking in the area of information technology and security, so they contracted a vendor to conduct IT assessments of all 28 Boards. WFSCB then followed that up with their own issuance of an RFP for IT Assessment & Strategic Plan in November of 2019. It was interesting to learn that the results from the two separate assessments produced very similar results. WFSCB has discussed this with other Workforce Boards and other private businesses who have had marketing assessments and that is how we derived this RFP document.

Q2. Please confirm that what is referred to in the RFP as the strategic plan is specifically a *Strategic Marketing Communications Plan*, and not a new/updated Strategic Workforce Plan for Board operations and service delivery.

A2. Yes, confirmed, the strategic plan for this RFP 24-04 relates specifically to marketing and communications only.

Q3. Can you clarify any specific outcomes or objectives you are prioritizing in the marketing assessment and strategic plan?

A3. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q4. Are there any internal benchmarks or KPIs already in place that we should align with?

A4. No.

Q5. Is there a particular format or structure you prefer for the final strategic plan and assessment report?

A5. After a contractor is selected, the format and structure of deliverable reports and plans will be discussed and determined during the initial meeting with WFSCB staff.

Q6. Can you provide details on the current technology stack being used for digital and design projects, social media, and website development? Are there any specific platforms or tools in use that we should be aware of?

A6. This will be identified during the discovery phase with the selected contractor.

Q7. Are there any marketing processes or tools that have been particularly successful or challenging so far?

A7. This is something that would be fully explored during the discovery phase.

Q8. What is the vision for future growth in terms of marketing and communications? Are there specific areas (staffing, technology, etc.) that WFSCB is considering expanding?

A8. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q9. Is there a particular timeline for implementing the strategic plan recommendations beyond the completion of this project?

A9. Unknown, this will be determined based on the recommendations from this process.

Q10. How often will the selected contractor engage with WFSCB staff for meetings, and how will access to internal resources be facilitated during the discovery and fieldwork phases?

A10. The frequency of meetings with WFSCB staff during the discovery and fieldwork phases is unknown at this time. This should be part of the strategy of the Respondents. A WFSCB staff member will be assigned to serve as the point of contact for all meeting and internal resource requests.

Q11. Related to discovery, is there a limitation to who can be included in interview questions? For instance, will the selected contractor have access to members of the Board of Directors or the Public Relations Committee to identify their vision for the outreach strategy and what success looks like from the Board's perspective? Or do you want us to get that information and feedback through the board staff instead?

A11. No, stay within the Board leadership, employees, and potential contractors.

Q12. Will WFSCB be able to provide all necessary documents, data, and personnel access for the review and assessment?

A12. Yes.

Q13. Could you provide more details on how proposals will be evaluated and what aspects (cost, approach, experience, etc.) are weighted most heavily?

A13. Please refer to Part 6.0 – Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process on pages 13 and 14 of RFP 24-04, and specifically paragraph 6.2 Evaluation Criteria and Scoring.

Q14. What are some potential challenges WFSCB has encountered in previous marketing efforts that we should be aware of while preparing our proposal?

A14. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q15. Are there any guidelines or constraints related to the project budget that we should be aware of when preparing our cost breakdown?

A15. No, there is no maximum budget because the budget for the assessment and strategic plan will depend upon the particular efficiencies and/or improvements that the selected contractor identifies and then the estimated cost of each piece of what is being recommended for implementation.

Q16. Will there be opportunities for further work after this project is completed, such as assisting with the implementation of the strategic plan?

A16. Perhaps. The strategic plan will be implemented by a contractor selected from a future and separate solicitation process. All Respondents to this RFP 24-04 have the opportunity to also respond to the future and separate solicitation pertaining to implementation of the strategic plan.

Q17. Are there any limitations or constraints that we should be mindful of during the course of this project?

A17. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q18. Can you clarify any specific insurance requirements beyond what's listed in the RFP?

A18. There are no insurance requirements beyond those listed in paragraph 2.5 Insurance on pages 7 and 8 of RFP 24-04.

Q19. How much of your 2025 Fiscal Year budget will be earmarked for the assessment of current marketing and communications and the strategic plan, or will you expect us to recommend that budget?

A19. There is no maximum budget because the budget for the assessment and strategic plan will depend upon the particular efficiencies and/or improvements that the selected contractor identifies and then the estimated cost of each piece of what is being recommended for implementation.

Q20. Questions:

- A. Are there existing partnerships (media buys, marketing partners, etc.) that need to be considered when crafting our plan/proposal?
- B. Can you share the current annual WSCB marketing AND paid media budget allocation managed annually?
- C. What are the primary channels you use for external communications with job seekers and employers?
- D. Are there any known platforms or mediums you're not currently utilizing but would like to explore?

A20. Answers:

- A. No, this is based on the information gathered from WFSCB and the Respondent's subject matter expertise.
- B. We don't currently have one.
- C. We have many social media channels.
- D. That's one of the items we need help with; Respondent would identify and make recommendations based on discovery and project.

Q21. What is your main measure of success? Number of job placements? Level of compensation for job placements? Amount of people served? And how does that relate to your funding?

A21. This varies by funding stream.

Q22. Are there any emerging demographics in the regional workforce that you feel are under-represented?

A22. If you reference our Board Strategic Plan, you will be able to see who and where our customers are.

Q23. What would you identify as your top three challenges that WSCB faces over the next 2-3 years?

A23. This changes as local economic and other regional issues occur.

Q24. Can you rank in importance your current marketing and communications objectives? Are your current Vision, Mission and Values representative of who you are today and the desired journey ahead?

A24. Yes, reference WFSCB's Mission and Vision; this project should be general to the organization.

Q25. Are there any new technologies or innovative approaches as it relates to workforce and economic development, if any, that WSCB wishes to utilize that may aid us in our recommendations?

A25. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q26. On the timeline, does the end date coincide with the end date of the contract (September 30, 2025) or is there an earlier date that the plan, timelines and cost estimates are expected?

A26. No, the September 30, 2025 contract end date does not pertain to the deliverables timeline. A proposed timeline should be included in Respondent's proposal. The final deliverables timeline will be established during the initial meeting between the selected contractor and WFSCB staff.

Q27. How do you envision the long-term success of the strategic plan and marketing assessment? Are you more focused on optimizing internal processes or improving external outreach and engagement? Are there specific sustainability goals or outcomes beyond the immediate FY25 objectives that we should be aware of?

A27. This project should be general to the overall organization not to a specific year and should focus on the entire organization, encompassing all things in marketing and communication.

Q28. Will the selected agency have the opportunity to collaborate with other WSCB departments (e.g., workforce development, technology, HR) to ensure that the marketing strategy aligns with internal objectives?

A28. Communication will be limited to the Board leadership, employees, and potential contractors.

Q29. What roles do community partnerships and local organizations play in your current marketing efforts? How important is it to involve these partners in the strategic planning process?

A29. Refer to WFSCB's Mission, Vision, and Board Strategic Plan.

Q30. As you work toward your future growth objectives, how flexible are your current marketing processes in adapting to rapidly changing market or industry conditions? Are there specific areas you believe could benefit from increased agility?

A30. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q31. How would you rate the effectiveness of your current messaging, branding, and content in communicating your mission to your key audiences (e.g., job seekers, employers, and partners)? What, if anything, would you like to improve?

A31. It has improved however, we need internal efficiencies to drive these actionable outcomes in the area of outreach each of the audiences.

Q32. Who will be the primary decision-makers and stakeholders involved in the review and approval of the strategic plan? Is there a specific governance process we should be aware of to ensure alignment with key players?

A32. The primary decision makers will be WFSCB's Leadership Team (CEO, COO & CFO). Contracts in the amount of \$50,000 or more require approval by WFSCB's Board of Directors.

Q33. Does WSCB currently use any customer relationship management (CRM) like Active Campaign, or automation tools to manage communications? Does it currently use a social media management tool like, Sprout Social? If not, are these potential areas open for future investment or improvement? In relation to your current digital tools and infrastructure, which systems are you satisfied with, and where do you see the biggest gaps in your current tech stack?

A33. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q34. Are there specific industry standards or best practices that WSCB adheres to when it comes to workforce development and economic growth marketing? How important is it for the new plan to reflect industry benchmarks?

A34. This should be part of the strategic plan of this project based on the Respondent's recommendations.

Q35. How is your current marketing team structured, and how involved are internal teams in developing and executing marketing initiatives? When considering recommendations for staffing and FTEs, are there specific skills you feel are missing within the communications team?

A35. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs.

Q36. How engaged are WSCB staff members across different departments in promoting mission and services? Is employee advocacy a component you'd like to strengthen in your marketing strategy?

A36. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs. Respondent would identify this in the discovery phase.

Q37. How willing would you say current key leadership (like CEO, COO) are to increasing their visibility and voices within the local community and the Texas workforce network? Are they interested in training and development in these areas? Have designated WSCB spokespeople received professional PR and on-camera training?

A37. That is the purpose of this RFA, to assist in identifying and prioritizing the marketing and communication needs and not specific to job titles but the overall organization.

Q38. Has the WSCB ever engaged with Marketing/Advertising, PR or internal employment branding providers? If so, can you briefly describe those experiences?

A38. Only on website projects and smaller projects.

Q39. How closely should the marketing and communications strategic plan align with your existing WFSCB Strategic Business Plan (2021-2024)? Are there any priorities from that plan you'd like us to focus on?

A39. It should align with WFSCB's Business Plan, Mission and Vision.

Q40. Beyond the scope mentioned in the RFP, are there any additional deliverables you expect that weren't explicitly listed, such as presentation materials or specific reports during the process?

A40. After a contractor is selected, the format and structure of deliverable reports and plans will be discussed and determined during the initial meeting with WFSCB staff.

Q41. In your view, how does Workforce Solutions of the Coastal Bend compare to other similar workforce development boards in terms of marketing and public perception? Are there specific opportunities to differentiate?

A41. All workforce boards are unique but have the same overall goals. This is general as to how we can improve and drive efficiencies.

Q42. Once the strategic plan is developed, what kind of ongoing support or updates would you expect from the chosen partner to ensure adoption, implementation and long-term success?

A42. The strategic plan will be implemented by a contractor selected from a future and separate solicitation process. All Respondents to this RFP 24-04 have the opportunity to also respond to the future and separate solicitation pertaining to implementation of the strategic plan.