



Peace Through Governance

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

I. ABOUT ONE EARTH FUTURE

One Earth Future (OEF) is a privately endowed operating foundation based in Broomfield, Colorado. Founded by natural foods and real estate entrepreneur Marcel Arsenault, OEF harnesses the power of networks to undermine the drivers of armed conflict.

OEF's programs focus on topics ranging from re-integrating former FARC combatants in the Colombia civil war to de-escalating tensions on the Korean Peninsula to seeding a vibrant business sector in Somalia. What holds them all together is a common approach: to impartially galvanize stakeholders from all sectors of society to come together and solve the complex problems driving armed conflict. Beyond funding, OEF provides administrative, creative, strategic, and research support to innovative yet unproven ideas. This enables our programs to challenge the status quo and establish themselves sufficiently in the systems they seek to impact before bringing in diversified funding.

OEF's unique approach, coupled with its financial, political, and intellectual independence, positions us well to play a transformative role around the world, and we are beginning to see evidence of our impact. Yet this uniqueness also presents a number of challenges related to strategic communication, which we are now seeking to address.

II. OPPORTUNITY & SCOPE OF WORK

For OEF, not needing to fundraise meant that we did not need to have a cohesive and compelling message in the same way other international NGOs do. While most see strategic communication as existential, for OEF it has been considered superfluous to our mission. Over time, this has led to an economically and operationally inefficient approach to strategic communication across the organization. By the end of this process, we hope that strategic communication is seen throughout the organization as a tool that can actively help us achieve our underlying mission.

Where strategic communication is concerned, OEF programs engage well at the tactical level. Our work products are of a high professional standard and tend to be well-received by our partners in the field. But between our organizational complexity and our historical lack of shared strategic objectives and sound metrics around strategic communication, valuable information produced by OEF simply has not been maximizing its potential.

We are looking for a firm that can help us articulate and reinforce OEF's core identity, build a strong centralized strategic communication function, and tie investments in strategic communication to organizational outcomes.

1. Establish an OEF Identity

As it stands, OEF has been straddling the line between a unified institution and a confederation of autonomous programs. On one hand, OEF has a single mission, and members of the team that need to speak for OEF as such have a set of messages they use when doing so. On the other hand, each program has its own mission, and because most of our program staff do not need to talk about OEF as OEF, they tend not to. As a result, virtually all of OEF's program identities are stronger than the OEF identity itself. This has inhibited our ability to engage with and influence decision-makers not already personally familiar with the work of one our programs.

It is important to note that the OEF name and visual brand are outside the scope of this RFP. Rather, we are interested in articulating, refining, and establishing internal buy-in for OEF's core messages, as applied to audiences we care about.

Objective: Establish a strong organizational commitment to a strong central OEF external relations mission to be enacted through a Comprehensive Engagement Strategy.

- Establish a strong central message for the organization that enables programmatic objectives.
- Develop a set of cohesive materials that define OEF as a whole and show how the programs fit into the overall OEF goals.
- Develop materials to be used by programs to help them tie their products and messages back into the larger OEF goals and messages.
- Establish the expectation for staff that OEF will define itself with a strong central message and engagement strategy that is supportive to programs and that programs are expected to support.

2. Tie Investments in Strategic Communication to Organizational Outcomes

OEF's approach to strategic communication has been ad hoc and tactically-driven. This means that OEF has been leaving impact---and money---on the table when it comes to strategic communication. We need to develop a more intentional and strategic approach that outlines a vision of success based on OEF's underlying priorities and objectives, strategies to achieve our objectives, and metrics to help us understand our progress.

Objective: Tie strategic communication to organizational outcomes in order to increase OEF's return on investment

- Conduct an audit to determine the total resources OEF is currently spending on external engagement, within the central Communications team and within programs.
- Work with OEF and program leadership to identify and articulate OEF's core strategic communications objectives and audience groups.
- Conduct an engagement assessment to determine the fundamental capabilities that exist and must be created within a centralized OEF External Affairs office, as well as the capacities within programs to engage in strategic communication independently.
- Identify top 10 convenenings and align resources and desired outcomes to these efforts.
- Identify best means to strengthen "connective tissue" between global change leadership centers and OEF.

3. Establish the Elements of a Centralized External Affairs Office

OEF is invested in the need for a strong, centralized strategic communication function to tell the story of OEF and to enhance the work being done, The task will be to operationalize it, paving the way for a senior strategic communication position within OEF. Doing this will require understanding and improving upon internal systems and processes, and to begin developing clear organizational expectations and standards around strategic communication.

Objective: Ensure a cohesive, united engagement approach across OEF, including a centralized hub and coordinated engagement practices common across programs.

- Provide a series of staff trainings on basic external affairs approaches that can be utilized across OEF and programs.
- Develop a set of standard external affairs SOPs to ensure consistency and brand and message consistency across all programs.
- Establish an external communication product review process that allows for timely prioritization and review of products within the organization.
- Train existing staff on basic communications functions: press release writing, "elevator pitch," social media, reporter engagement.
- For all levels of program staff, create standards around the amount and type of external engagement required, and train them for success.
- Provide guidance to OEF Senior Leadership on staffing and building out a permanent internal strategic communication function.

III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the bidder's ability to meet the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

All proposals should include the following elements:

- An executive summary of no more than 1 page;
- A brief description of the history and organization of the bidder's firm, and of any proposed subcontractor;
- A brief description of at least three (3) similar projects completed by the bidder within the past three (3) years. Include personal references with contact information for each;
- Qualifications, background and experience of the project director and other staff proposed to work on the project, including resumes for each;
- A general description of the techniques, approaches and methods to be used in completing the project containing:
 - Examples of how the proposed activities might use innovative solutions to approach existing market barriers;
 - The approach that will be taken to continuity and integration between program components (if applicable);
 - A process for engaging stakeholder groups and evaluating efficacy;
- A detailed cost proposal, based on the following specifications:
 - Cost may be bid either as a monthly retainer fee or an hourly rate with a monthly maximum cap.
 - Costs should be broken down by objective (i.e., Establish and OEF Identity; Tie Investments to Outcomes; Establish the Elements of a Central External Affairs Office)
 - The contractor will be responsible for all cost and expenses incident to their performance of services.
- Proposed Management Structure & timeline for completion, including:
 - An organizational chart for the scope of service including reporting structures for program administration (that includes key staff and any subcontracted firms);
 - Clear descriptions of roles and responsibilities for all key staff and any/all subcontractors involved in the proposed scope of service;
 - A high-level timeline for program deployment.

All questions about the RFP, as well as the final proposals themselves, should be **submitted electronically to Terry Jones at tjones@oneearthfuture.org no later than March 31, 2018.**

IV. EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF PROPOSAL

The proposal will be evaluated by the President and any others whom he chooses to be involved in the evaluation process. During the evaluation process, OEF reserves the right, where it may serve the to request additional information or clarifications from bidders, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. OEF reserves the right to have discussions with those bidders falling within a competitive range, and to request revised pricing offers from them and to make an award or conduct negotiations thereafter. OEF reserves the right to reject all proposals submitted without cause.

The final selection or recommendation will be made by the President of OEF, in consultation with the Board of Directors, based upon the following criteria: 1) qualifications, experience, and competence; 2) quality of work; 3) ability to provide services, and; 4) cost.

Upon selection, the bidder and OEF will draft and sign a formal contract.