



**JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY
Request for Proposals (RFP) 23-04
Marketing and PR Services**

ISSUE DATE: AUGUST 3, 2022

ISSUING AGENCY: Office of Purchasing and Travel
Jackson State University
1400 John R. Lynch Street
Jackson, MS 39217

Sealed proposals, subject to the conditions made a part hereof, will be received until **Wednesday, September 7, 2022 at 11:30 a.m. in the JSU Office of Purchasing and Travel**, same address as above, for furnishing services as described herein.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Indicate firm name and RFP number on the front of each sealed proposal envelope or package.

All inquiries regarding this RFP should be directed to:

Emily Tschiffely
Office of Purchasing and Travel (same address as above)
emily.c.tschiffely@jsums.edu

Any addendum associated with this RFP will be posted at <https://www.jsums.edu/finance/bid-information/> located under RFP 23-04. It is the respondent's responsibility to assure that all addenda have been reviewed and, if applicable, signed and returned.

Note: Questions concerning the specifications in this RFP must be submitted in writing and will be accepted until August 22, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. A summary of all questions and answers will be posted at <https://www.jsums.edu/finance/bid-information/> as an addendum located under RFP 23-04 by 5 p.m. on August 26, 2022. The questions, answers and any revisions to the RFP will be posted.

RFP Response Checklist – Include these items in your response to RFP 23-04.

_____ (1) One clearly marked original response, an electronic copy in PDF files on a flash drive, and six (6) identical copies of the complete proposal. Label with the Vendor name and RFP number. Include the items listed below.

_____ (2) Submission Cover Sheet APPENDIX A, signed and dated accompanied by a Cover Letter indicating the scope of the proposal. In addition, the letter should include a statement indicating the ability to comply with all requirements of agreement and acceptance of the standard contract. If needed, clearly identify any proposed changes to the standard contract. The letter should include a statement of exceptions to any of the terms and conditions outlined in this RFP, if needed. Cover letter should explain why your firm would be the best choice for JSU. Any Corporate-wide programs, performance standards and metrics, unique features, key initiatives, and the corporate support structures pertinent to the JSU program should be included.

_____ (3) Vendor Response to Management Requirements Questionnaire plus an overview of vendor qualifications, organizational profile (including operation under other Vendor names providing the same or similar services) and organizational chart. Describe how the organizational structure will ensure orderly communications, distribution of information, and effective coordination of activities, accountability, and decision-making authority.

_____ (4) **In a separately sealed envelope – Technical Specifications Response – NO INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE VENDOR SHALL BE INCLUDED.**

_____ (5) **In a separately sealed envelope – Cost Specifications - NO INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE VENDOR SHALL BE INCLUDED.**

_____ (6) References: Provide three (3) similar or like clients as references, for which Respondent has performed (or is currently performing) work similar in nature and scope within the last five (5) years. Information should include:

- Institution
- Institution's Address
- Contact name, telephone number, and email
- Similarity with scope and size of the JSU
- Length of time services have been provided

RFP Marketing and PR Services
Due: 11:30 a.m. September 7, 2022

The proposal package must be received on or before 11:30 a.m. on September 7, 2022. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the proposal package arrives in the Office of Purchasing and Travel on-time. The proposal package should be delivered or mailed to:

OFFICE OF PURCHASING AND TRAVEL
JACKSON STATE UNIVERSITY
1400 John R. Lynch Street
Jackson, MS 39217

When using a delivery service or hand delivering, the address is: H.P. Jacobs Administration Tower, 4th Floor, Office of Purchasing & Travel, Jackson State University, 1400 John R. Lynch Street, Jackson, MS 39217.

ALL QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RFP SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO EMILY TSCHIFFELY AT emily.c.tschiffely@jsums.edu.

JSU reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive informalities and minor irregularities in proposals received and to accept any portion of a proposal or all items, if deemed in the best interest of the University to do so.

Proposals received after the stated due date and time will not be accepted. Submission via facsimile or other electronic means will not be accepted.

UNIVERSITY OVERVIEW

Jackson State University, founded in 1877, is a historically black, high research activity university located in Jackson, the capital city of Mississippi. Jackson State's nurturing academic environment challenges individuals to change lives through teaching, research and service. Officially designated as Mississippi's Urban University, Jackson State continues to enhance the state, nation and world through comprehensive economic development, healthcare, technological and educational initiatives. The only public university in metropolitan Jackson, Jackson State is located near downtown, with three satellite locations throughout the area.

With the appointment of its 12th president, alumnus Thomas K. Hudson, J.D., the institution is well-positioned to embark on a new journey of fiscal responsibility, sound leadership and renewed positive energy. Additionally, the appointment of celebrity Coach Deion Sanders has thrust the institution into a national spotlight that has become an economic boost to the city of Jackson and the university by way of earned media placements, national recognition, and additional funding. The time is right to capitalize on the increased visibility to roll out a strategic marketing and PR plan that properly positions the institution for a season of growth.

Jackson State University unveiled its Elevate Strategic Plan in September 2021, which embodies our vision to take the institution to new heights as we produce more distinguished scholars, global leaders and community servants. We are invested in our student body's academic success, and we have a game plan to enhance every facet of the college experience, from exploring cutting-edge research to improving the sustainability of our campus resources, to supporting our scholars to graduate on time and on budget.

JSU Elevate is a framework of six institutional goals that Jackson State University will execute to raise the institution's profile.

Goal One: STUDENT SUCCESS: Jackson State University will become one of the most student-centered universities in the country by implementing relevant and appropriate student success strategies, developing students holistically, and ensuring student Return on Investment (ROI).

Goal Two: ACADEMIC PROMINENCE: Jackson State University will become one of the most respected and prominent academic institutions in the country by becoming a Top 10 U.S. News & World Report ranked HBCU, providing quality teaching using various modalities to develop technologically-advanced, ethical, and global leaders, and having the largest and best HBCU online degree program offerings.

Goal Three: RESEARCH EXCELLENCE: Jackson State University will raise the level of research prominence and reach R1 "very high research activity" status by increasing our research capabilities, growing strategic partnerships, driving innovation and economic development, and providing opportunities for faculty and students to engage in impactful collaborative research.

Goal Four: ATHLETIC PROWESS THROUGH ENHANCED PROGRAM SUPPORT: Jackson State University will become one of the premier NCAA FCS sports programs in the country where student-athletes compete fearlessly on and off the field; are retained and graduate; have access to quality coaching, mentorship, and facilities; and are actively engaged in campus life beyond athletics.

Goal Five: IMPROVE CAMPUS AESTHETICS AND SUSTAINABILITY: Jackson State University will retain and grow its status as one of the most beautiful and attractive urban campuses in the country by continuously investing in its physical plant and grounds, repairing and renovating older facilities, and building new structures in order to compete favorably for students, faculty and staff.

Goal Six: IMPROVE THE CAMPUS CULTURE AND ENHANCE THE JSU BRAND: Jackson State University will become nationally known for quality customer service, efficient and effective operations, nurturing, caring and competent faculty and staff, and alumni who readily give of their time, talent, and

treasure; and fulfilling our desire to be a great community, city, and state resource and partner.

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSAL ON RFP

Jackson State is seeking a full-service marketing agency to submit proposals for an integrated marketing communications campaign that includes the following objectives:

- Conduct research to determine current sentiments and awareness about Jackson State University.
- Build brand awareness locally, regionally and nationally of Jackson State University and stimulate intentions to apply for attendance among students and donations from alumni and philanthropists.
- Stabilize and grow enrollment.
- The firm selected to provide these Marketing Communications Services should have a team with a designated account service lead.
- The firm selected will report to JSU's Chief Communications Officer, and its role will be a key foundation of the overall integrated marketing plan.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Bidder shall describe how it will fulfill the specifications described below. The creativity and completeness of the response will be considered in evaluating the proposal. A comprehensive integrated marketing communications plan will achieve the stated objective for each of the target audiences listed. What are your creative ideas to speak specifically to each audience?

The scope of services to be provided shall consist of the following:

- Qualitative and quantitative market research discovery
- Brand Platform consisting of a planning session and brand strategy
 - Planning session with a select group of University decision-makers for stakeholder mapping to explore opportunities and provide recommendations for leveraging various platforms for maximum impact with the target audiences and influencers.
 - Brand Strategy to structure and articulate the JSU brand. The "Brand Brief" should include decision-maker and influencer viewpoints, the brand position, and selling platform, as well as creative interpretations of the brand.
- A comprehensive marketing and PR campaign that identifies efficient and cost-effective activities to include:
 - Overall marketing campaign theme and plan for implementation
 - Overall public relations campaign and plan for implementation

RFP Marketing and PR Services

Due: 11:30 a.m. September 7, 2022

- Utilization of appropriate strategies such traditional media, digital, media relations, experiential, direct, and social marketing to affect the desired outcomes.
- Digital marketing to reach both in-state students and out-of-state targeted areas. The Bidder must have the following targeting capabilities:
 - Demographic – Segment audiences based on their socioeconomic characteristics such as gender, age location, household income, parental status.
 - Geographic – Target communities within a focused footprint.
 - Behavioral – User data based on target audience profiles and browsing behaviors.
 - Contextual – Reach audiences as they browse relevant, quality content.
 - Whitelist – Identify premium and/or specific publications that are of high interest to our brand.
- Digital marketing to emphasize academic programs showing growth or that have potential for growth based on university enrollment and state/regional job market data.
- Provide Video production, landing pages and photography in support of the campaign.
- Provide Metrics and monitoring of marketing effectiveness, including recommendations for redirection of resources as needed. The implementation plan must include a recommended annual marketing budget. Bidders must have the capabilities to:
 - Normalize and put data into context
 - Unify all digital media buys (display, paid social, video, audio, paid search, etc.)
 - Compare performance of each channel
 - Organize and provide real-time data
 - Integrate offline data from outside reports
 - Build customized reports
 - Provide proactive feedback on campaigns at a predetermined frequency
 - Implement best-practice brand safety monitoring and fraud protection
- Stakeholder Relations: Talking points, narratives for Elevate Strategic Plan, Reports
- Brand positioning/narrative
- Media Relations and Management: print, TV and online media
- Evaluation and audit of current communications and outreach channels.
- Marketing and communications objectives and strategies that align with JSU's strategic plan.
- Detail of tactics (and estimates) necessary to accomplish the marketing objectives.

Additional Requirements – INCLUDE WITH TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS RESPONSE

- Contractor shall agree to indemnify the University from any claims, actions, suits, causes of action, or demands, which may include, but is not limited to court costs and legal fees, arising from the implementation of the services to be provided.
- In event of default by contractor or termination of contract, contractor shall agree to provide service on a month-to-month basis at existing rates for up to six months.
- There shall be no cost increase during the initial term. A cost increase may be considered at the beginning of each renewal term. In the proposal, the contractor must provide the justification and methodology for applying the cost increase and indicate the proposed amount of cost increase.
- JSU reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received, to waive any informalities or irregularities in proposals received, or to accept any proposal which is deemed most favorable to the University.
- Terms and conditions that constitute grounds for termination will be specified in the contract. JSU reserves the right to terminate contract with sixty (60) days' notice or at the time of the contract renewal. The standard contract can be found at <https://www.jsums.edu/finance/files/2022/07/JSU-Standard-Contract-Template-07-2022.pdf>.

Insurance Requirements

Contractor, upon award, but prior to any work commencing, shall provide certificates of insurance coverage as outlined below.

- Contractor, as an independent contractor, shall provide proof of Comprehensive General Liability insurance and Workers' Compensation insurance. The Contractor shall provide a Certificate of Coverage mailed to JSU, Office of Purchasing and Travel, 1400 J.R. Lynch St., Jackson, MS 39217 ten (10) working days prior to start of services. The Certificate of Coverage should, at a minimum, contain the name of the carrier, effective and expiration dates of coverage, a description of the covered perils, and amount of coverage by peril, the name and mailing address of the insurance company, and the name and mailing address of the insurance agent. The Certificate of Coverage must name the Board of Trustees of MS State Institutions of Higher Learning and JSU as additional insureds. The additional insured requirement shall be by an endorsement form, or an equivalent or broader form, or by blanket additional insured endorsement, and the general liability coverage shall be primary and noncontributory in respect to insurance maintained by JSU or IHL. Further, Contractor agrees to waive any rights of subrogation against IHL or JSU. The Comprehensive General Liability coverage shall be a minimum amount of Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) per occurrence and Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) annual aggregate through an insurance company with a Best rating of A- or higher and a financial size Class X or higher approved by the Mississippi Department of Insurance. No material change in coverages may occur for JSU or IHL without 30 days advanced notice.
- Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability: Standard limits as required by applicable Worker's Compensation Laws.

RFP Marketing and PR Services
Due: 11:30 a.m. September 7, 2022

Certificates of insurance with coverage as described above shall be furnished by the Contractor prior to the commencement of services under this agreement and such certificates shall provide that the coverages will not be canceled or reduced in amount prior to 30 days after notice of such cancellation has been mailed to the Purchaser. Certificates shall be endorsed to include a waiver of subrogation in favor of Jackson State University and that Contractor hereby waives all rights of recourse, including any right to which another may be subrogated, against Jackson State University for personal injury, including death, and property damage.

COST REQUIREMENTS

The pricing quoted must be inclusive of, but not limited to the following:

- All required equipment and materials
- All required insurance
- All required overhead
- All required profit
- All required transportation
- All required labor
- All required business and professional licenses, permits, fees, etc. (if any)
- All management fees (if any)
- Any and all other costs associated with performing the services
- Fees will be on a firm-fixed monthly rate for services, not as billable hours.
- Please propose what you believe is a reasonable and fair monthly fixed rate for this initiative.
- Hard costs, for pre-approved marketing communications and promotions will be reimbursed upon submission of documentation outlining actual costs paid by Contractor.

MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

What year was your company started? _____

How many years and/or months has your company been in the business of performing the services called for in this RFP?

Please provide the physical location and mailing address of your company's home office, principal place of business, and place of incorporation.

If your company is not physically located in the region, how will you supply professional services to the agency?

Is your company currently for sale or involved in any transaction to expand or to become acquired by another business entity? If yes, please discuss the impact both in organizational and directional terms.

List all licenses, permits or certifications your company possesses that are applicable to performing the services required in this RFP.

For how many customers has your company provided these services in the past two (2) years? Please include the dates and the annual amount of the billing to each customer.

What is the largest customer your company has provided these services for in the past two (2) years? Please include the annual amount of the billing.

Describe any specific services which your company offers along with any specialized experience, certification, and/or education of your current staff.

INQUIRIES ABOUT RFP

Prospective respondents may make written inquiries concerning this request for proposal to obtain clarification of requirements. Responses to these inquiries will be by addendum to the Request for Proposal (RFP). The deadline for inquiries shall be August 22, 2022 at 5 p.m. Please send your inquiries to emily.c.tschiffely@jsums.edu.

SCHEDULE OF CRITICAL DATES

- a) The following dates are for planning purposes only. Unless otherwise stated in this RFP, progress towards their completion is at the sole discretion of JSU.

I.	RFP Posted	AUGUST 3, 2022
II.	Prospective respondents written inquiries deadline	AUGUST 22, 2022
III.	Responses to inquiries posted	AUGUST 26, 2022
IV.	Proposal submission deadline – 11:30 A.M.	SEPTEMBER 7, 2022
V.	Potential Oral Presentations & Interviews	SEPTEMBER, 2022
VI.	Award determination date (estimated target)	OCTOBER 1, 2022

RFP Marketing and PR Services
Due: 11:30 a.m. September 7, 2022

- VII. Contract signed (estimated target)
- VIII. Contract effective date (estimated target)

OCTOBER 26, 2022
NOVEMBER 1, 2022

WRITTEN OR ORAL DISCUSSIONS/PRESENTATIONS

After the opening of all offers received by the closing time and date for accepting offers, Respondents may be required, at the request of JSU, to make a public oral presentation or provide written clarifications to their offers. Oral presentations may be recorded. Any oral presentation or written clarification given by Respondent will be considered part of their response to this RFP. Appropriate personnel in JSU's Office of Purchasing and Travel will schedule any such presentations or address any needed written clarifications. JSU reserves the right to request a "best and final offer" at its discretion.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

JSU reserves the right to conduct discussions with any or all respondents, or to make an award of a contract without such discussions based only on evaluation of the written proposals. JSU reserves the right to contact and interview any reference listed. JSU may make a written determination showing the basis upon which the award was made and such determination shall be included in the procurement file.

JSU reserves the right to award this contract in whole or in part depending on what is in the best interest of JSU with JSU being the sole judge thereof.

The evaluation factors set forth in this section are described as follows:

- The vendor's ability to deliver services meeting the overall objectives and functions described in this RFP
- Competitive fees
- Availability and access to technical support
- Vendor's experience
- Compliance with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations
- The evaluation committee may invite finalists for interviews and/or presentations. Failure to participate may result in a proposal not being considered.

Proposals will be scored based on the following weights (100 points total):

- Corporate Structure/Years of Experience/References – 20 points
- Marketing and PR Plan/Services Offered – 30 points
- Fees – 50 points

TWO-PHASE, BEST AND FINAL OFFER

If the initial proposals do not provide JSU with a clear and convincing solution, or if JSU feels it is appropriate to offer the potential providers an opportunity to submit revised proposals, JSU reserves the right to use a two-phase approach and/or invite Best and Final Offers (BAFO). Based on the information obtained through the proposal submissions (Phase-One), JSU may choose a specific business model, and potential providers may be asked to submit revised proposals based upon that specific model.

The evaluation committee may develop, for distribution to the top-ranked firms, refined written terms with specific information on what is being requested as a result of information obtained through the initial RFP process. Proposers may be asked to reduce cost or provide additional clarification to specific sections of the RFP. Selected proposers are not required to submit a BAFO and may submit a written response notifying the solicitation evaluation committee that their response remains as originally submitted.

TERM OF CONTRACT

It is JSU's intention to enter into a one (1) year contract with up to two (2) one (1) year extensions estimated to begin November 1, 2022.

JSU reserves the right to terminate this agreement with thirty (30) days' notice, by the Vice President for Business and Finance via certified mail to the address listed on the signature page of this RFP (See Appendix A) if any of the terms of the proposal and/or contract are violated.

In the event the Contractor fails to carry out and comply with any of the conditions and agreements to be performed, JSU will notify the Contractor, in writing, of such failure or default. In the event the necessary corrective action has not been completed within a ten (10) day period, the Contractor must submit, in writing, why such corrective action has not been performed. The University reserves the right to determine whether or not such noncompliance may be construed as a failure of performance of the Contractor.

Termination of contract by Contractor without cause can only occur with at least one-hundred and twenty (120) days' notice prior to the proposed termination of the contract.

In the event JSU employs attorneys or incurs other expenses it considers necessary to protect or enforce its rights under this contract, the Contractor agrees to pay the attorney's fees and expenses so incurred by JSU.

ACCEPTANCE TIME

Proposal shall be valid for one-hundred eighty (180) days following the proposal due date.

RFP CANCELLATION

This RFP in no manner obligates JSU to the eventual purchase of any services described, implied or which may be proposed until confirmed by a written contract. Progress towards this end is solely at the discretion of JSU and may be terminated without penalty or obligations at any time prior to the signing of a contract. JSU reserves the right to cancel this RFP at any time, for any reason, and to reject any or all proposals or any parts thereof.

OTHER CONTRACT REQUIREMENTS

Award Terms: This contract shall be awarded at the discretion of the University based on the cost as well as the capabilities and overall reputation of the Contractor. Acceptance shall be confirmed by the issuance of a contract from JSU.

Standard Contract: The awarded Contractor(s) will be expected to enter into a contract that is in substantial compliance with [JSU's standard contract](#). Proposal should include any desired changes to the standard contract. It should be noted that there are many clauses which JSU can not change. Significant changes to the standard contract may be cause for rejection of a proposal.

The Procurement Process: The following is a general description of the process by which a firm will be selected to fulfill this Request for Proposal.

- Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued.
- A deadline for written questions is set.
- Proposals will be received as set forth in the Schedule of Critical Dates.
- Unsigned proposals will not be considered.
- All proposals must be received by JSU no later than the date and time specified on the cover sheet of this RFP.
- At that date and time, the package containing the proposals from each responding firm will be opened publicly and the name of each respondent will be announced.
- Proposal evaluation: JSU will review each proposal submitted.
- At their option, the evaluators may request oral presentations or discussions for the purpose of clarification or to amplify the materials presented in the proposal.
- Respondents are cautioned that this is a request for proposals, not a request to contract, and JSU reserves the unqualified right to reject any and all proposals when such rejection is deemed to be in the best interest of the University.
- The proposals will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth in the Evaluation of Proposals section of this RFP.

APPENDIX A: SIGNATURE PAGE

Provide information requested, affix signature and return this page with your proposal.

Name of Firm: _____

Complete Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Authorized Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Title: _____