

**EDA OF JONES COUNTY REQUEST FOR QUOTES:
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT SERVICES**
Tourism Industry Recovery, II

Quotes due on or before 5:00 p.m. CDT on SEPTEMBER 13, 2023.

ABOUT THE EDA OF JONES COUNTY

The Economic Development Authority of Jones County performs all marketing functions to promote Jones County as a destination using the brand of “Visit Laurel & Jones County.” The EDA is a government entity deemed by the Mississippi Legislature, Jones County Board of Supervisors, Cities of Laurel and Ellisville and the towns of Soso and Sandersville as the official organization responsible for tourism promotions for all of Jones County.

DESTINATION WEBSITE: WWW.VISITJONES.COM

OBJECTIVE

Quotes are being requested from qualified firms who have a working knowledge of the tourism industry and can demonstrate the necessary experience to manage all aspects of the Visit Laurel & Jones County’s social media and blog presence.

The EDA OF JONES COUNTY intends to contract with a qualified agency to support its continued recovery efforts, stemmed from the negative economic impacts of COVID-19. This contract will be funded through federal ARPA dollars for Mississippi Tourism Recovery, II.

This in no way commits the EDA OF JONES COUNTY to award a contract, to pay any costs in preparation of a quote, or to contract for the goods and/or services offered. Although it is the EDA OF JONES COUNTY’s intent to contract with the person/company that best meets the qualifications to complete the scope of work, the EDA OF JONES COUNTY may terminate the negotiations if they are unsuccessful in reaching an agreement on all matters including the scope of work and cost.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

- The contract would be for up to 3 years for the EDA’s fiscal years that will run October 2023-September 2024, October 2024-September 2025 and October 2025-September 2026.
- Manage the Visit Laurel & Jones County Facebook and Instagram accounts to include:
 - 3-5 posts/week/channel
 - Manage stories for each account
 - Present content calendar monthly to client for approval with text and all assets that will be posted
 - Schedule posts and boost as needed with a pre-determined monthly allowance
 - Monitor and respond to post comments and app messages
 - Research, advise and execute plans to increase followers and engagement
 - Share/repost relevant content from complimentary accounts

- Provide monthly reporting of campaign performance
- Blogs
 - Research, write and post 1 blog per month to Visitjones.com
 - Optimize links and keywords as needed
 - See examples here: <https://thenewstateofjones.com/blog/>
- Pinterest
 - Create and monitor organic pins and boards using existing content; 1-2/month
 - Re-pin relevant content
 - Provide monthly reporting of campaign performance

AVAILABLE FUNDS

BUDGET: The EDA OF JONES COUNTY will fund this contract at a maximum of \$50,000. This budget is based on content development and placement, strategy development and execution, boosted ads/posts, and out-of-pocket expenses. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY reserves the right to adjust both the budget and related services.

BILLING: THE EDA OF JONES COUNTY limits invoicing to one invoice per month. Each invoice should be on letterhead from the selected agency and include the month(s) for which payment is due as well as detail of work completed at the mutually agreed upon rate(s) or amount in the executed contract.

TIMELINE

This tentative timeline may be altered at any time at the discretion of the EDA OF JONES COUNTY and will be funded through federal ARPA dollars for Mississippi Tourism Recovery, II.

RFQ available to agencies.	AUG. 31, 2023
Final day to submit questions regarding this RFQ.	SEPT. 8, 2023, by 5PM CDT
Questions answered	SEPT. 11, 2023 by 5PM CDT
Quotes due by 5:00 p.m. CDT.	SEPT. 13, 2023 by 5PM CDT
Quotes evaluated by RFQ committee.	SEPT. 14-15, 2023
Interviews with final candidates, if necessary.	SEPT. 18, 2023
Recommendation approved by EDA Board; Contract negotiations begin.	SEPT. 19, 2023
Work begins for a limited duration, decided in contract negotiations.	OCT. 1, 2023

SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS & DELIVERABLES

Your response to this RFQ must be submitted in the following format and labeled accordingly:

1. **Statement of Qualifications** – Provide a written statement of your firm’s qualifications for providing the work as described in the Scope of Work.
2. **Tourism Experience** – Provide a written statement of your involvement in the tourism industry, specifically with DMO clients, industry memberships and resources.
3. **Organization, Ownership and Management**
 - a. Name, address and telephone of the entity that will be contracted with and all trade names to be used.
 - b. Name, address and telephone numbers of the organization’s principal officers and other owners.
4. **Organization’s Structure and Experience**
 - a. Organizational chart of company, including any subcontractors who will work with the EDA OF JONES COUNTY.
 - b. Total number of employees including full time, part time and contract workers.
 - c. Short history of the company, especially as it relates to work in the tourism sector.
 - d. Summary of employees who will work on the account including their name, title, a short summary of their qualifications and their main role in working with the EDA of JONES COUNTY.
 - e. Hours of operation that staff will be available and any satellite offices.
 - f. Experience as it relates to strategic planning, messaging, ad design, website design and placement strategy. No more than **three** relevant case studies should be provided, including project goals with measurable KPIs and results. Creative work should be included for each case study.
5. **Client Information & References**
 - a. Name any travel/tourism clients and their current status.
 - b. Three references that are current accounts with contact names, email and phone numbers.
6. **OFFICIAL CONTACT** - The EDA OF JONES COUNTY requests the proposer designate one person to receive all communications for clarification and verification of information related to this quote. Please identify this point of contact on the quote.
7. **Conflict(s) of Interest** - The proposer must declare and provide details of any actual, potential or perceived conflict(s) of interest.
8. **Certification Form** – Certification Form (attachment 1) must be signed and accompany all RFQ Response submissions.

CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

1. Submittals in response to this request and respondents' participation in the process shall be at no cost or obligation to the EDA OF JONES COUNTY. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY reserves the right to, at any time, abandon or terminate its efforts to contract for any or all of said services without any obligation to any respondent.
2. Responses to this request and other materials submitted shall become the property of the EDA OF JONES COUNTY and will not be returned.
3. Respondent shall not contact any EDA OF JONES COUNTY personnel or staff after this request has been advertised, except to ask questions as specified below under "Respondent Questions." Such contact will be considered cause for disqualification.
4. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY may waive any informalities or minor defects or reject any and all submittals.
5. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY reserves the right to reject any submittal if the evidence submitted by, or investigation of, such respondent demonstrates that such respondent or its subcontractors, in the EDA OF JONES COUNTY 's opinion, is not properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the Contract or to complete the Work contemplated therein.
6. All applicable laws, ordinances, and the rules and regulations of all governmental authorities having jurisdiction shall apply to the Contract throughout.
7. This Contract is being funded through a grant provided to the EDA OF JONES COUNTY by the State of Mississippi as part its ARPA State and Local Fiscal Relief Fund (SLFRF) allocation received from the U.S. Treasury Department. The SLFRF program places numerous obligations on recipients and subrecipients, which flow down to successful respondent. Each respondent is cautioned to carefully review the *Supplemental Terms and Conditions (attachment 2)* which are a part of the sample contract and to ensure that all responsibilities and obligations are properly addressed.
8. By executing a signature on the submittal, respondent certifies that:
 - a. Neither the respondent, nor any of its team members, is currently debarred from submitting quotes or entering into contracts issued by any political subdivision or agency of the State of Mississippi or the Federal Government.
 - b. No Federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the respondent, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
 - c. If any funds other than Federally appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, respondent shall complete and submit Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

EVALUATION & SELECTION

The EDA OF JONES COUNTY will establish a committee to evaluate all quotes. The committee will then make a recommendation of the selected organization to the Board of Directors who will formally vote to accept the recommended quote and move into contract negotiations.

SELECTION PROCESS – STEP 1

Quotes meeting all requirements will be evaluated by a review committee who will evaluate the following components:

- Tourism industry experience
- Qualifications to execute the plan of work
- Budget and Timeline
- Ability to illustrate return on investment for suggested strategies
- Overall evaluation of presentation of organization and its ability to integrate with the EDA OF JONES COUNTY team and needs

SELECTION PROCESS – STEP 2 (if necessary)

The EDA OF JONES COUNTY reserves the right to hold interviews and/or bring questions to the final candidates before a recommendation is made from the evaluation committee.

SELECTION PROCESS – STEP 3

A contract will be awarded to the organization whose quote is determined to be the most advantageous to the EDA OF JONES COUNTY, taking into consideration the criteria set forth in this RFQ. Upon completing the selection process under this RFQ, the EDA OF JONES COUNTY will notify the winning proposer and all other proposers who were not selected. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY's evaluations of quotes are confidential and as such, the EDA OF JONES COUNTY is unable to respond to any questions and/or requests for information as to why a company was not selected.

SELECTION PROCESS – STEP 4

After awarding the contract, the schedule will include a period of collaboration between the EDA OF JONES COUNTY and the selected agency to better define, elaborate upon, and update the agency's final Scope of Work and general Terms and Conditions. For the selected agency, an employee will be designated as your contact and will coordinate any materials needed or questions answered with all other EDA OF JONES COUNTY employees.

STANDARD CONTRACT

A copy of the EDA of JONES COUNTY'S standard contract template is attached (attachment 3) to be referenced for this quote. By responding to this request, the respondent is asserting its intent to accept the terms and conditions contained therein unless exceptions to the contract are provided as part of the respondent's submittal.

DELIVERY REQUIREMENTS

Please submit your responses in hard copy and electronic format. All quotes should include a clear, concise narrative. Quote format is open to presentation style but must include the aforementioned items. It is advised, but not required, to submit five printed quotes (5).

Printed submissions must be marked "RFQ: Social Media Management Services" and delivered to:

EDA of JONES COUNTY
c/o Amanda Roll
153 Base Dr.
Suite 3
Laurel, MS 39440

Electronic submissions should be provided in PDF format and sent to amandar@edajones.com with the subject line: "RFQ: Social Media Management Services." Quotes may not be faxed.

Submittals received in any manner not specifically set forth above shall not be accepted or considered. Submittals received after the deadline will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that the submittal is received by the specified deadline. The delivery date and time will be recorded upon receipt. The EDA OF JONES COUNTY will not be responsible for late or incomplete responses due to mistakes or delays of the respondent or carrier used by the respondent or weather delays. A postmark will not be considered proof of timely submission.

QUESTIONS

Note that all answers regarding questions and request for clarification for this RFQ will be responded to publicly consistent with the schedule below to ensure that all respondents have the same information.

Email Amanda Roll, amandar@edajones.com, with any questions by September 8, at 5:00 p.m. CDT. No calls, please.