

Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Request for Proposals

Community Engagement Phase of the Public Education Initiative

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Closing Date: Monday, September 11, 2006 5:00 PM (Eastern Time)

Please submit proposals *electronically* on or before the closing date. CPB reserves the right to reject proposals that are submitted after the closing date.

1. Statement of Purpose

The goal of the *Community Engagement* project is to develop a model of community engagement that allows public television and radio stations to build on their broadcast services in order to establish themselves as significant local organizations, important to and deeply involved in the civic life of their communities.

2. About CPB

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting is a private, nonprofit corporation created by Congress in 1967. The mission of CPB is to facilitate the development of, and ensure universal access to, non-commercial high-quality programming and telecommunications services. It does this in conjunction with non-commercial educational telecommunications licensees across America.

3. Background

Public broadcasting stations serve their communities in a variety of ways. They offer in-depth news and public affairs programs, children's programs, and cultural and performance programs. They make available network programming that illuminates national topics and they produce local programs that address important community issues. They provide this content through radio, television, and new media platforms. Stations offer all of these services in a non-commercial format, treating viewers and listeners not simply as consumers but as intelligent and active participants in all aspects of American life.

Many public broadcasters operate the last locally owned broadcast outlet in their community. With the programming decisions of other media providers made from afar, locally owned public broadcast stations understand that their connection to community is not only a critical component of the value they provide, it is what sets them apart. This strong local community connection has become an essential component of many stations' mission.

As organizations that are connected to their communities, public broadcasters also serve listeners and viewers beyond the broadcast. Many stations proactively work to identify local needs and develop initiatives to address those needs. They convene meetings of community leaders, partner with influential local institutions, produce educational materials, and act in a variety of ways, face-to-face as well as over-the-air, to encourage civic participation in and understanding of important national, state, and local issues.

In public television, these beyond-the-broadcast activities are generally referred to as "outreach." Outreach activities are educational or informational initiatives that are designed to increase the impact and usefulness of the programming. Often, outreach activities involve collaborations with other community institutions. Several years ago, in recognition of the potential for impact, CPB joined with the public television community to found the National Center for Outreach, an organization that helps stations develop models for effective outreach.

Public radio stations engage in similar – though less extensive – activities. For example, stations may co-sponsor cultural events with a performing arts organization, stage lectures with civic leaders, engage in voter education, or support civic activities with local community organizations. Many public radio stations use terminology like “building institutional significance” or “increasing community impact” instead of the term “outreach” used in public television.

Regardless of the terms used to describe these activities, public broadcasting clearly invests significant resources in their communities in ways that go beyond traditional production and transmission of broadcast programming.

4. Beyond Outreach: Institutional Significance

Connection to community is important to public broadcasting stations beyond their positions among the last locally-owned media outlets. Of greater significance is the impact of technology and new media platforms that deliver content directly to consumers while bypassing the local station. In the past stations could simply pass high quality programming that was produced elsewhere along to the listener or viewer, interspersed with the occasional local program. Now, however, many stations are attempting to define themselves as much more than a programming pass-through. Instead, they seek to capitalize on their strong commitment and connection to community and establish themselves as significant local and regional public services and public media institutions.

The community partnerships and collaborations that make up effective outreach have traditionally relied on one set of activities to achieve this outcome. Increasingly, there is interest in moving to the next level by identifying roles and organizational models that will allow stations to achieve an even higher degree of community importance and integration. In short, stations want to establish themselves as organizations at the heart of community life, acting as essential contributors to public life, culture, and prosperity.

5. Project

CPB is interested in exploring new and different models of community engagement that can build on the influence and significance that public broadcasting stations already enjoy in their communities to establish stations as a truly essential part of community life.

CPB would like to learn whether the knowledge and techniques of community engagement developed and used by other kinds of community organizations might be applied to public broadcasting as a way to achieve the goal of true institutional significance. CPB is interested in identifying new models of community engagement and creating demonstration projects with selected stations to test the effectiveness of a variety of new approaches.

6. Workscope

Interested vendors should propose a project design that they determine will provide the most useful information and maximize the impact of CPB’s investment in the project.

As a general guide, we are interested in proposals for the following services:

- Overview: Provide an orientation to community engagement and institutional significance within a community service context. This orientation could include a synopsis of the kinds of community engagement activities that have been successfully used by community service organizations, case studies of successful initiatives that might be applicable to public broadcasting, and/or a brief summary of any academic underpinning that might inform and guide these activities.
- Relevant models: Provide a summary of the engagement techniques that would be most helpful to public broadcasting stations and that are proposed for the project.
- Demonstration projects: Design and stage demonstration projects with at least twelve public broadcasting stations. Stations will be selected in consultation with CPB to be geographically dispersed, broadly representative of station size, service area, nature of program service, and ownership type.
- Fact finding: Conduct town hall meetings (at least four), focus groups, or other approaches designed to solicit public opinion and inform the question of how public broadcasting stations can best engage their communities and establish themselves as essential, valued community organizations.
- Training and dissemination of “lessons learned”: Broadly disseminate the findings of the demonstration project so that techniques shown to be effective can be adopted by stations throughout the public broadcasting system. We would anticipate such dissemination would occur through at least three regional workshops across the country, as well as through presentations at conference sessions, on-line content, and on-site consultation to stations (at their own cost.)
- Coordination with the Public Awareness Campaign: Provide the necessary materials so that these activities and findings can be integrated and coordinated with the “public awareness” initiative currently being designed at CPB. The purpose of the public awareness initiative is to strongly affirm the value of public broadcasting in a civil society to a diverse set of audiences ranging from Members of the United States Congress to individuals who watch, listen, and provide financial support to public television and public radio.
- Recommendations: Prepare recommendations to CPB for system-wide areas of investment that would to increase the significance of stations at the community level.

With regard to the demonstration project phase, CPB anticipates that the proposals would include consultation to assist each selected station to identify factors relevant to its unique situation, for example:

- key issues in its community;
- issues best aligned with station capabilities and upon which the station may have the most significant impact;

- key civic leaders, experts, and community organizations whose participation the station might solicit; and
- methods of convening communities to address selected issues in a manner that is 1) consistent with the role of the station in the community, which may include a journalistic role, and 2) outcome oriented, building station performance and recognition as an institution of true community importance.

Having identified these factors, we would then expect the successful firm to assist each station to:

- develop and launch a community engagement initiative and to identify appropriate metrics that CPB and the station may use to assess the impact of the initiative; and
- develop a strategy for extending the lives of their community engagement initiatives beyond the demonstration period.

Finally, we would ask the successful firm to:

- observe the current methods of outreach employed at each station in the demonstration project; and
- advise CPB as to the firm's perception of strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement in station efforts, and the materials and services used by the station, such as those provided to the station by the National Center for Outreach.

7. Qualifications

Firms submitting proposals should be able to demonstrate that they have the following qualifications:

- They have developed a formal framework for building effective civic interaction that is rooted in sound theory;
- They can demonstrate significant successful experience working with organizations to increase the impact they have on their communities;
- They possess a deep understanding of how public life works and how civic change occurs;
- They understand the current context of public life and the challenges institutions have in effectively engaging people; and
- They employ proven models for measuring the lasting impact of community service initiatives.

8. Time frame

The project should be complete, including design, execution, and reporting, within 24 months of contract execution. Please include an estimate of the timing of key milestones and an overall timeline with the proposal.

9. Proposal Policies

CPB is not responsible for loss or damage to the material submitted. Any submission to CPB shall become the property of CPB (not including any intellectual property rights contained in such submission), and CPB is not required to return any submitted materials to any applicant. CPB is not responsible for any violation of copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret, or other rights that may result from disclosure made by response to this RFP.

Solicitation by CPB of proposals does not constitute an agreement by CPB to extend funding to any party for the project under consideration. CPB may, in its sole discretion, elect not to pursue this project in any manner.

By submitting a proposal, each applicant grants to CPB the right to duplicate, use, disclose, and distribute all of the materials submitted for purposes of evaluation, review, and research. In addition, each applicant guarantees that the applicant has full and complete rights to all of the information and materials included in the proposal. Each applicant also guarantees that all such materials are not defamatory and do not infringe upon or violate the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party.

10. Conditions of Agreement

If a proposal is selected for funding, applicants will be required to sign a binding agreement. Until both parties have signed an agreement, no express or implied commitment has been made to provide financial support. Applicants are not authorized to commence work until the agreement is fully executed. If applicants opt to commence work, they do so at their own risk. No oral or written statement other than the signed, written agreement will govern or modify the relationship.

As a condition of agreement, applicants must guarantee that, among other things, any work they undertake on behalf of CPB is not defamatory and will not violate or infringe upon the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party. Contractors must also agree to indemnify CPB against any loss resulting from breach of any of the guarantees contained in the agreement.

Those receiving funds from CPB must be able to comply with a number of requirements that will be included in the operative agreement. These requirements include but are not limited to:

- (1) A demonstration of adequate financial support to complete the work for which they have been contracted and to deliver reports and/or other intellectual property created pursuant to the Agreement;

- (2) Maintenance, for three years following receipt of relevant funds, of all financial records to the project, which records shall be accessible to CPB, and to the U.S. Comptroller General or other representatives for examination and audit purposes; (Contractors will additionally ensure that any subcontractors or consultants under the agreement shall also maintain such records for the period specified and under the same terms);
- (3) Maintenance, for three years after approval of a final financial report, of a complete file of all subcontracts and other agreements, licenses, clearances, and other documents related to the work undertaken, copies of which shall be made available to CPB on request;
- (4) Submission to CPB of a copy of any U.S. Comptroller General final audit report in connection with the project;
- (5) Compliance with equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and policies;
- (6) Applicants who plan to engage sub-contractors will be expected to obtain competitive bids, and to provide assurances that the prices obtained for any such services are fair and reasonable;
- (7) Applicants will be required to provide documentation as to actual costs, and provide supporting detail demonstrating that all costs are reasonable, necessary and allocable to the requirements and objectives of the work undertaken; and
- (8) All research and materials created, developed, compiled or produced pursuant to or as a result of this project (including but not limited to all reports) will be considered ordered and commissioned by CPB as works made for hire under the copyright laws, and made in the course of services rendered. If, for any reason, the proposed research and materials to be provided are not considered works made for hire under the copyright laws, then the applicant will be required to assign all right, title and interest in and to such research and materials to CPB. Applicants further agree that neither they, nor any of their subcontractors, will have any copyrights whatsoever in any research and/or materials created, developed, compiled or produced by them or by any subcontractor, or by any third party participating in the preparation of research or materials for this project.

Other material terms and provisions will be set forth in the documents provided to the applicant that successfully completes the selection process.