Request for Proposal
SR-16-01
“Corporate Communications Strategy”
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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The American University of Beirut (hereinafter referred to as “AUB”) (http://www.aub.edu.lb) is an educational not-for-profit corporation established under the laws of the State of New York, U.S.A., including a Campus and a Medical Center, in Beirut, Lebanon, and an office in the U.S.A., in New York (NY), U.S.A.

AUB serves over 12,000+ users. It consists of more than 4,500 faculty and staff, and has an enrolment of approximately 8,000 students, more than 1,200 of whom reside on Campus.

Additionally, AUB’s medical center (AUBMC) established in 1902, is a private not for profit teaching healthcare facility, serving the community and training medical and paramedical professionals. AUBMC is currently the only medical institution in the Middle East with the four international accreditations of the Joint Commission International (JCI), Magnet®, ACGME-I and the College of American Pathologists (CAP) attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, medical education and pathology/laboratory services. With a highly skilled and trained team of over 2,500 members and over 300,000 patient visits throughout the past year AUBMC is committed to improving the delivery of health care in Lebanon and the region.

AUB is requesting offers from qualified agencies / consultants for Corporate Communications Strategies as specified under Section 2.
2 OVERVIEW

2.1 PURPOSE

To invite proposals from qualified "Corporate Communications" agencies/consultants that can provide strategic support, deliver on initiatives and tactics, with measurable outcomes and on time to meet the outlined objectives.

The contract will cover three main communications, branding and marketing areas, specifically:

- Overall University communications strategy
- Support in launching and optimizing the next capital campaign
- Maintaining and developing strategic communications for the Medical Center as an entity within AUB.

Agencies/consultants should apply for the three areas together and should be able to demonstrate successful track record of involvement in all of health care communications, higher education communications and large-scale fundraising campaigns.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

1. To position AUB brand as the top institution for excellence in higher learning in the humanities, liberal arts, professional education and medicine in the MENA region, and achieve global attention for its academic programs, research, expertise, and civic, humanitarian and educational impact in multiple areas.

2. To provide fast-track communications support for the coming AUB capital campaign (due to launch Jan 2017), including devising theme, branding and messaging components.

3. To position AUBMC as top facility for health care services in Lebanon and the region in the minds of patients and future patients and raise public awareness of the excellence of the care and clinical services available.

The successful agency/consultancy should take a 360-degree approach incorporating multiple constituencies, internal and external, multiple platforms and channels; the University seeks to work with a dedicated team of at least four account supervisors:

- Overall account manager,
- Specialist account executive for health care,
- Specialist account handler for general higher education,
- Digital media account executive.

Additionally editorial and creative support shall be provided by the agency.
2.3 SCOPE

➢ Develop a coherent global strategic identity for the University and its Medical Center, to be communicated with the general public and key audiences, in the MENA region and targeted international audiences, and to support implementation in conjunction with existing internal institutional resources.

➢ Define the best structure and operational means to implement its communication, with the highest productivity, by integrating existing resources and reallocation of new ones, with external linkages as necessary, to improve levels of reach and engagement with key audiences.

➢ Identify the necessary elements to establish the AUB brand rooted in its core academic and healthcare activities, establish communication points, and identify how brand-name equity can be leveraged across the most effective channels of communication, activated both centrally and via diverse stakeholders across the AUB community.

➢ Define and provide as necessary coaching or training for selected Faculty and other AUB community members to be able to articulate and support the University’s brand identity.

➢ Provide bespoke digital style guides and toolkits, within the context of to AUB’s on-going website development, for use by diverse stakeholders to amplify a unified pan-university message, while allowing stakeholders to establish individual but complementary identities within their areas.

➢ Define and support ways to measure and to build on the success of public relations, media and marketing campaigns.

➢ Provide confidential crisis management advice pertaining to issues that have potential to adversely impact on the reputation of the University or its employees.

➢ Provide strategic communication support and messaging advice on issues related to AUB’s capital campaign, including development of theme, branding, messaging, and events components. Train faculty and administrative spokespersons on communicating core messages specific to the capital campaign.

➢ At the conclusion of the contract, present and lead discussion of recommendations for AUB administration and provide a detailed summary of the work and specific recommendations for implementation of future communications strategy.

Additional healthcare account requirements:

➢ Develop and support the activation and implementation of healthcare awareness campaigns that strengthen AUBMC’s CSR image for public service healthcare provision.
➢ Engage in benchmarking research to give insight into AUBMC’s position in healthcare industry locally and regionally.

➢ Sustain and develop communications strategy for AUBMC’s 2020 Vision and other major projects, including the Faculty of Medicine’s 150th Anniversary in 2017.

➢ Establish well-defined media buying strategy seeking high-level placements in relevant print, broadcast and digital media.

➢ Identify speaking opportunities for thought leadership, executives and physicians and secure local, regional and international opportunities for interviews and conferences participation.

2.4 TANGIBLE OUTCOMES

➢ Increase awareness and improve reputation under measurable criteria of AUB as a center of excellence in the region, attracting the brightest students—regardless of ability to pay—and top faculty, who carry out transformative education, research, and medical, civic and humanitarian service.

➢ Increase perception of AUBMC in target audiences as the leading academic medical center in the region that offers the highest standards of patient-centered care.

➢ Increase in the enrolment of highest-achieving students at undergraduate and graduate levels, from Lebanon, the Arab region and internationally, with a focus on core liberal arts and humanities, health sciences and medicine, and professional qualifications.

➢ Increase in the recruitment of elite international talent in pedagogy, research and academic leadership and administration.

➢ Generate a shared understanding of AUB’s core mission and purpose, and an acceptance of the importance of communicating it as broadly and effectively as possible.

➢ Improve quality and engagement of communications with AUB alumni chapters and community and increase participation of worldwide alumni community in university affairs and fundraising.

➢ Develop ways to motivate new and existing donors at all levels in order to increase number, size, frequency of financial support and donations in kind.

➢ Increase patient load at AUBMC, especially at inpatient services, private clinics, and outpatient services, and in the number of regional patients visiting AUBMC.

➢ Increase in public awareness locally and regionally surrounding the AUBMC 2020 Vision, and increase in donations and funds raised to support it.
3 REQUIREMENTS PROCESS

3.1 PARTICIPATION TO RFP
Agencies / consultants willing to submit their proposals should confirm by sending an Intent to Respond through an email to Mr. Salim Ramadan (Email sr33@aub.edu.lb) within 2 business days of receiving the RFP.

3.2 APOLOGY
In case the requested services are not available, or you do not want to participate in this bid, you are kindly requested to respond by submitting a written apology to bidadmin@aub.edu.lb indicating the reason and the bid reference number.

3.3 PRE-BID MEETING
A Pre-Bid Meeting shall be held with all interested bidders during the week of 19th – 23rd September, 2016. The exact date and time will be communicated later by e-mail.

3.4 INQUIRIES
All inquiries related to this bid shall be addressed to the bid administration (Email bidadmin@aub.edu.lb). The deadline for asking all questions shall be 28th of September 2016. Answers shall be forwarded to all bidders on the 30th of September 2016.

3.5 SUBMISSION DATE AND TIME
Offers must be submitted on or before the 10th of October 2016, 01:00 p.m.

3.6 SUBMISSION ADDRESS
Offers must be submitted to the following address:

Bid Administrator
American University of Beirut
Office of Financial Planning
College Hall, 2nd floor, Room 218
Bliss Street - Beirut – Lebanon

Offers submitted by hand or via post mail shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope clearly marked: RFP SR-16-01 “Corporate Communications Strategy”.

Moreover, the offers should be sent including the following:
- Two copies of the Agency / Consultant profile
- Two copies of recommended strategy and approach
- Two copies of the Financial Offer
- Filled and signed copy of Appendix A (Bidder Contact Information and Proposal Checklist)
- A List of References
- A list of similar projects handled by your agency
- A soft copy of all the submittals

Alternatively, offers may be submitted by email to bidadmin@aub.edu.lb only, however the confidentiality of electronic submissions through emails cannot be guaranteed by the University.

In the event that AUB offices are officially closed on the date the proposals are due, the deadline for submission shall be automatically extended until the next business day.

### 3.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

All information included in this RFP are confidential and only for the recipient knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party. AUB may require bidders to execute a Non-Disclosure and Conflict of Interest Agreement before being provided with some or all of the information included in the tenders.

### 3.8 INSUFFICIENT DATA

It is the responsibility of the person submitting the proposal to ensure the completeness of the information submitted. Failure to do so may result in the elimination of the proposal from consideration.

### 3.9 RFP AWARD & EXECUTION

AUB reserves the right to cancel the RFP without giving the reasons, at any stage prior to the execution of the contract whether before or after the selection of the successful Supplier. AUB reserves the right to reject any proposal without giving the reasons for such rejection. Unless otherwise stipulated, the RFP and proposal of the selected bidder will become part of any contract initiated by AUB. The contract form will be provided by AUB upon selection of the successful bidder. AUB will not incur any liability to any bidder as a result of using its rights hereunder or any other right provided for by law.
3.10 VALIDITY

Proposals submitted shall be valid for one year from the date of submission. Proposals will be treated as final and binding offers and may not be amended or withdrawn without the written permission of the University.

3.11 PROPOSAL OWNERSHIP

All materials submitted in response to this RFP shall become the property of AUB. Selection or rejection of a proposal does not affect such right.

3.12 COSTS

The University will not be liable for any costs incurred by Suppliers prior to issuance of or entering into a contract. Costs associated with developing the proposal, preparing for oral presentations, and any other expenses incurred by the Suppliers in responding to this RFP are entirely the responsibility of the Supplier, and shall not be reimbursed in any manner by AUB.

3.13 PAYMENT

AUB payment will be processed as per University’s policies and procedures.

3.14 DISCLOSURE

Supplier represents and certifies that the offer has not been knowingly disclosed directly or indirectly to any competitor or AUB staff or other Supplier before the opening of proposals by AUB. Supplier represents and certifies that the financial terms have been established independently without consultation, communication, or agreement for the purpose of restricting competition or any matter relating to such prices with any competitor or other Supplier. Supplier represents and certifies that no attempt has been made to induce any other company or person to submit or not to submit a proposal in response to this RFP for the purpose of restricting competition.

3.15 GOVERNING LAWS

The laws of Lebanon shall govern the validity, interpretation, construction, performance, and implementation of this RFP. Any dispute arising out of this RFP shall be exclusively settled by the courts of Beirut, Lebanon.

Hanan Itani Ramadan
Director of Procurement & Contracts Administration

Cc.: Internal Audit Office
    Bid Administrator
### APPENDIX A

**BIDDER CONTACT INFORMATION AND PROPOSAL CHECKLIST**

#### Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supplier Name:</th>
<th>Company stamp:</th>
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<td>Prepared by:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supplier quotation Ref.:</td>
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<td>Technical Support Hot Line:</td>
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<td>Technical Support Engineer Name:</td>
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#### Proposal Checklist

- Have you submitted your proposal to the address (electronic or mailing) as specified in Article 3.6 above?
- Does your offer include two copies of the *Agency / Consultant profile*?
- Does your offer include two copies of *proposed strategy and approach*?
- Does your offer include two copies of the *Financial Proposal*?
- Does your offer include two copies your *List of References*?
- Does your offer include two copies your *List of similar projects*?
- Have you filled a supplier application or updated your supplier application form during the past three years? If not, please contact Procurement and Contracts Administration Department.