

**California (CA) Jobs First (formerly known as Community Economic Resilience Fund Program CERF)**

**Request for Qualifications (RFQ): Coalition Marketing and Communications**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Purpose:** The Kern Community College District (KCCD) on behalf of the Kern Coalition solicits qualifications from qualified consultants or vendors experienced in communicating complex topics with diverse audiences through engaging design and delivering brand materials and website creation under tight timelines. This RFQ serves as a full scope of the project, and respondents may bid on any portion of work or the entire scope.

**Background.** Community Economic Resilience Fund (CA JOB FIRST), authorized in Senate Bill 162, is an equity-centric, nontraditional approach to a post-pandemic economic recovery that leads to quality jobs and family-sustaining careers.

For more information on the Kern Coalition's background and activities carried out thus far, please visit: [Kern Coalition \(kccd.edu\)](http://kccd.edu).

**Mission:** The Kern Coalition's mission is to unify and bolster local efforts that advocate for the equitable attainment of good, quality jobs that promote a resilient economy and positive health, social, and environmental outcomes in disinvested communities through diverse representation and securing direct investments for economic development strategies.

**Vision:** To eliminate generational poverty and promote equitable economic mobility for all in Kern County by ensuring investments dismantle systemic barriers.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Applicants must demonstrate an ability to develop and execute a marketing and communications plan on behalf of the Kern Coalition, with a specific focus on raising awareness of the California Jobs First process among target audiences.

- A. We encourage applications from entities with experience in social impact, specifically including inclusive economic development, health equity, environmental equity and economic equity
- B. We encourage applications from entities with prior experience working in Kern County, or with experience working in other regions with similar demographics and audience characteristics
- C. As the fiscal agent for the Kern Coalition, awardees must adhere to Kern Community College District policies and fiscal requirements

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The selected vendor will provide marketing and communications strategy and services to support the organization and a two-year project term. Launch components including logo design, branded templates and website to be delivered on a tight timeframe. All communications and materials will be multi-language, English/Spanish/Punjabi with possible others on occasion as needed.

### A. Kern Coalition Logo/Brand Development

1. Engage a small set of key stakeholders (co-convenor leads) to
2. Create a logo and related design (fonts, colors, etc.) to establish the Kern Coalition brand
3. Design supplemental materials including letterhead, business cards, email signature, templated PPT deck, report template and MailChimp newsletter template
4. Develop design standards and guidelines for charts, graphs and other data visualizations
5. All materials, branding and content must be multilingual (English, Spanish and Punjabi) with potential need for some items translated to other languages.

### B. Website Creation

Currently, the Kern Coalition has a landing page embedded on the KCCD website (<https://kccd.edu/kern-coalition>) which provides basic information, recent news and links to minimal resources. The new site will be a stand-alone website, built in Wordpress or similar platform, with high-profile language toggle and accessibility features for all pages. Requirements for this component of the RFQ are:

#### Purpose of Website

The website must communicate the vision and ongoing actions of the Kern Coalition as well as provide up-to-date information for stakeholders across the region as it relates to engagement opportunities.

The objective of the website is to transparently communicate the Kern Coalition vision, mission, actions, opportunities and information to key stakeholders: 1) Community Based Organizations; 2) Private sector; 3) Partner Organizations and potential partners; and 3) Government; and continue to engage them as partners in the work.

#### The qualifying firm must have capabilities in areas including, but not limited to:

- Ability to create and launch site on ambitious timeline
- Responsive website design and development
- User friendly navigation
- Translation
- Web analytics and reporting
- Visual appeal and clear messaging reflecting the organizational branding - Inclusive, accessible information

1. Content + Design
  - a. Content and site structure (page navigation) to be developed by agency in collaboration with Kern Coalition co-conveners
  - b. Site and design should allow for frequent updates through a user-friendly CMS such as Wordpress
  - c. Design should include home page, at least two corresponding templates, one for top-level pages and one for interior, as well as specialty pages including posts and events
  - d. Mobile-first design resulting in rich mobile and desktop experiences across all site functions, on all appropriate browsers and browser versions
  - e. Some photos/visuals will be made available, though the use of stock photography and/or custom photo shoots may be needed to supplement
  - f. Creation of 2-3 custom graphics, including a map of the Kern Coalition region, as determined
  - g. Estimate should include three rounds of revisions as the budget allows
2. UI/UX
  - a. Dual language for all components (preferably eng/span toggle at top of every page similar to [valleycerf.org](http://valleycerf.org))
  - b. Adherence to all web accessibility standards
  - c. Posts page with categories for news and press-hit listings
  - d. Events calendar, with ability to easily create new events and link to registration through platforms such as Zoom and EventBrite
  - e. Integration of YouTube videos, Instagram feed and other social media as determined.
  - f. Ability to embed data/charts from tools such as Tableau, Google Charts and similar
  - g. Navigation that intuitively offers appropriate pathways for key audiences
  - h. Google analytics and SEO optimization plugins
  - i. Search function
  - j. Contact form
  - k. Newsletter sign up integrated with third party platform

### **C. Video production**

1. Produce at least two custom 1-3 minute videos, from concepting and scripting to shooting and editing: one evergreen brand video and one narrative video, plus shorter teaser versions of each

### **D. Ongoing Marketing Services**

1. Collaborate and recommend methods to build public engagement and awareness
2. Ongoing Graphic Design for social media, presentations, slide decks, reports and items as needed
3. Social Media account creation and strategy
  - a. Monitor early performance and consult on strategy for engagement
  - b. Recommend/brainstorm other tactics as appropriate for reaching target audiences Work with translator to translate as needed

- c.
- 4. Design of final report documents in Kern Coalition Branding including full community report as well 2-4 executive summary versions for target audiences. (Examples include [Uplift Central Coast](#), [Upsurge Baltimore](#))
- 5. Ongoing website maintenance
  - a. Hosting, maintenance, and tech support for site

**TERM OF ENGAGEMENT AND BUDGET**

There may be multiple consultants who will perform work in a specific area of the scope of work. The term of the consultant contract will be July 2024 - December 31, 2025 [USE END OF CATALYST PROGRAM AS END OF CONTRACT], subject to approval of the KCCD Board of Trustees.

Fees for all services may not exceed \$114,000.00 throughout the performance period.

The contract can be bid on in its entirety or by individual items. The cost for Item D can be proposed as an hourly agreement or a fixed amount per month after the project moves from the creation to the maintenance phase. Proposing consultants are responsible for all costs of developing and submitting an application package, interviews or any other bidder costs associated with responding to this solicitation.

Contractors will be expected to provide weekly progress updates to the co-convener team and join meetings with co-conveners, consultants and others as requested.

**PROJECT TIMELINE**

The high-level tentative project milestone dates are as follows:

<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>Date</b>
Video Creation	Jul. - Aug. 2024
Regional Plan Report Creation	Jul. - Aug. 2024 (report due to State by Aug. 30, 2024)
Initial Brand Designs Due	Week of August 12, 2024
Early Website Landing Page Design Due	Week of August 26, 2024
Ongoing Marketing Support	Sep. 2024 - Dec. 2025

## APPLICATION DETAILS

### Expected RFQ Timeline

	Date(s)	Event
1	July 3, 2024	RFQ Released to the public
2	July 12, 2024	The due date for Vendor Questions -Please email to <a href="mailto:KernCERF@kccd.edu">KernCERF@kccd.edu</a>
3	July 22, 2024	<b>DUE DATE FOR APPLICATIONS FROM VENDORS</b>
4	July 23, 2024	Selection Committee Review
5	July 26, 2024	Notification of Award
6	July 29, 2024	Contract Review and Execution

As we work through the contracting process, we anticipate services to begin no later than July 29, 2024 and all work to be completed by September 30, 2024.

1. Application Submission Information
  - a. Closing Date: Applications must be submitted by July 22 at 5 P.M.
  - b. Inquiries: Inquiries concerning this RFQ should be directed to the [KernCERF@kccd.edu](mailto:KernCERF@kccd.edu) email.
  - c. Cost of Application Preparation. All costs incurred in preparing an application responding to this RFQ will be the Vendor's sole responsibility and will not be reimbursed by KCCD. Unless otherwise stated, all materials submitted by Vendor in response to this RFQ shall become the property of Kern Coalition.
2. Application Submission Instructions to Vendors: Your application should be submitted via the [Google Form](#).

### Right to Reject

KCCD reserves the right to reject any applications received in response to this RFQ. The Contract for the accepted application will be based on the factors described in this RFQ. KCCD reserves the right to waive any informalities or irregularities in any application.

### Confidentiality

The Vendor agrees to keep the information related to negotiations in strict confidence. Other than the reports submitted to KCCD, the Vendor agrees not to publish, reproduce, or otherwise

divulge such information in whole or in part, any manner or form or authorize or permit others to do so, taking such reasonable measures as are necessary to restrict access to the information. At the same time, in the Vendor's possession, those employees on the Vendor's staff must have the information on a "need-to-know" basis. The Vendor agrees to notify, in writing immediately, KCCD authorized representative in the event the Vendor determines or has reason to suspect a breach of this requirement.

### **Notification of Award**

KCCD anticipates but does not guarantee that the Contract will be awarded after the Notice of Award. In the best interest of the District, KCCD reserves the right to contract with more than one vendor.

The award will be made to the most responsible Vendor(s) whose service, experience, and approach to the project are most compatible with KCCD needs. KCCD will be the sole judge in making this determination.

### **Small, Women, and/or Minority-Owned Business**

Efforts will be made by KCCD to utilize small businesses, women, and minority-owned businesses, considering that the primary responsibility is the most favorable return to KCCD.

A Vendor qualifies as a small business firm if it meets the "small business" definition established by the Small Business Administration (13 CFR 121.201).

### **Application Requirements**

The application must include the following:

- A. Cover Letter: A one-page cover letter with the name and contact information of the proposed Vendor.
- B. Statement of Qualifications:
  - a. List your experience, including a brief description of the scope of services and outcomes similar to the scope as described in this RFQ.
  - b. Describe the background, experience, and qualifications of the person(s) who will act as the consultant and the capabilities of any staff who will assist with this project (include their role, education, relevant experience, and related qualifications). This includes identifying the lead agency and any sub-awardees to carry out portions of the scope of work. If sub-awardees have not been identified, provide clarification and a plan for identifying partners.
  - c. List 3 to 5 (five) projects you developed in similar size and scope to this RFQ, and share any lessons learned from those projects that would be relevant to this initiative.
- C. Evidence of System for Award Management (SAMs) registration
- D. Provide at least three (3) references, including the contact's name, affiliation, address, direct telephone number, and email address.

- E. Describe in detail the fee structure for marketing and communications services
- F. Conflict of Interest: Provide a statement of any potential conflicts the Vendor and/or key staff may have regarding providing these services. The information should include actual conflicts and any working relationships that disinterested parties may perceive as conflict. If no potential conflicts of interest are identified, state them in your application.

The vendor shall have read and be aware of the provisions of Section 1090 et seq. and Section 87100 et seq. of the Government Code relating to the conflict of interest of public officers and employees. No officer or employee of the Kern Coalition or member of its governing body shall have any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in the resulting Contract or the proceeds thereof.

- G. Vendor Information Sheet.
- H. W-9
- I. Additional Terms and Conditions.
- J. Insurance Requirements.

### **Vendor Requirements**

All responsive applications shall be reviewed and evaluated by the California Jobs First Kern Coalition co-conveners to determine which application best meets the Kern Coalition's needs for this project by demonstrating the competency and professional qualifications necessary.

### **Performance of The Required Services**

Accounting for the contracting process, it is anticipated that the strategy development will begin July 29, 2024 and continue through December 31, 2026.

### **Selection Process and Criteria**

This is a NEGOTIATED procurement; an award will not necessarily be made to the Vendor submitting the lowest-priced application. Instead, an award will be made to the Vendor submitting the best responsive application satisfying KCCD requirements, as determined by KCCD, including consideration of price and other indicated factors.

Advance Payment options are not available. A reimbursement model will be used for awarded contractors.

### **Nonresponsive Application**

Applications may be judged nonresponsive and removed from further consideration if any of the following occur:

- The application is not received timely by the terms of this RFQ.
- The application does not follow the specified format.

### **Application Evaluation**

Evaluation of each application will be scored on the factors identified in Section B. below. In compliance with 2 CFR Part 200.319 – Competition, no geographic preferences will be given in the evaluation of this application since the section states: "The Non-Federal entity must conduct

procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed state or local geographical preferences in the evaluation of bids or application, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference.” The selection process is designed to ensure that the Vendor’s services are engaged based on demonstrated competence and qualifications for the type of services to be performed and at fair and reasonable prices for KCCD.

- A. The Kern Coalition Co-conveners will review all applications received by the specified deadline for content, fees, related experience, and professional qualifications of the Vendor.
- B. The evaluation and selection of the successful Vendor shall be based upon the factors listed below with corresponding point evaluation. The total points available are 100.

### **Scoring Matrix**

Evaluation of each application will be scored on the following factors:

1. Understanding the RFQ requirements and completing all required documentation as listed in the Application Requirements section of this RFQ. In addition to the above, include the following:
  - Workplan, including milestones and deliverables.
  - Project Lead(s) who will be the primary liaison with the Kern Coalition and proposed meeting schedule. Key personnel background, certifications, and experience in providing the requested services.
  - Points = 40
2. Experience and relevance of similar work products and services provided to other entities and success in performing this service.
  - Points = 30
3. Fees/Pricing Structure (i.e., monthly retainers, flat fee, cost per application methodology)
  - Points = 10
4. Demonstrated experience engaging low-income populations and disinvested communities
  - Points = 20
  - Total Points =100

KCCD may, at its discretion, request presentations by or meetings with any or all Vendors to clarify the Vendors’ applications. However, KCCD reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the applications submitted. Therefore, applications should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both technical and price standpoints, which the Vendor can propose.

KCCD contemplates awarding the Contract to the responsible Vendor with the highest total points awarded by the Kern Coalition co-conveners. In the best interest of the District, have the ICA documents been sent to those who opted in to compensation, KCCD reserves the right to contract with more than one vendor.



Upon final selection, the Contract will be processed by KCCD for the award of the Contract.

**Conditions to Award**

- A. KCCD reserves the right to delay the selection process, withdraw and reissue the RFQ, alter RFQ language, or cancel this procurement.
- B. This solicitation does not commit KCCD to pay any costs in preparing or presenting a submittal.

**Timeline.** The start time to fulfill the application's requirements shall be after the Contract is signed.

**Prohibited Activity**

Vendors or their agents shall only make personal contact with members of the KCCD KHRTC Board of Directors or Kern Coalition personnel after selecting and awarding a Contract for this work.