



**AMERICA 250-OHIO COMMISSION**  
***Public Relations Agency RFQ/RFP***

**Questions and Answers**

**Q: What will a successful partnership look like at the conclusion of this work?**

A: One where both the selected PR firm and America 250-Ohio feel that it was worthwhile. That the two organizations benefited, that the work was enjoyable, and that the partnership generated the desired results.

**Q: What is the anticipated budget or budget allocation for this PR campaign?**

A: We are waiting for the state budget to be approved at the end of June to know our total budget for all operations for FY '24-25. As such, we don't know exactly what the budget will be. Based on our best estimate with the scope of services somewhere around \$75,000 per year, for the two fiscal years we would have for this budget round. For FY '26, we would potentially anticipate a higher spend since it will be the primary year. However, that budget would be part of the FY'26-27 budget, so there are no guarantees of what the funding levels will look like for that time period.

**Q: Is there a separate budget for agency fees and expenses?**

A: The estimated \$75,000 would be for agency fees and expenses.

**Q: Who has to approve media relations content?**

A: Generally, it will be the Communications Director, Executive Director, and one or both of the Co-Chairs of the Commission. There may be times where more reviewers and/or parties to approve are required depending on the nature and sensitivity of the communication.

**Q: Can a new website be created so that it is easier to find and can be more robust?**

A: Yes, we are working on a new basic site to launch this summer and then will be working toward a more robust framework for early 2024. The website is not in the scope of this RFQ/RFP.

**Q: Who are your primary partners who we would be engaging in the various Ohio counties e.g. Would it be the CVBs? Do any CVBs already have plans in the works to support this celebration?**

A: We will have partners across a broad spectrum including CVB's. Other partners will include county commissioners, city governments, libraries, historical societies, arts and culture organizations, affinity groups such as the Daughters of the American Revolution and Sons of the American Revolution, universities, and other state of Ohio departments such as Tourism Ohio. We have been getting interest from a wide spectrum of organizations.

**Q: Who do you consider to be your top target audience(s)? What call to action do you hope they take (e.g. visit the state, change perception of Ohio, etc.)?**

A: We would like to work closely with the selected PR partner to help identify the potential audiences. There are some obvious ones with people who have an interest or affinity with history, but we think the messaging strategy will be broader and we can engage different segments of the population. We will have several objectives including: awareness of the 250th anniversary, that Ohio is participating (and why), drive people to engage with the activities, and that Ohioans will have an appreciation and understanding of Ohio's contribution to U.S. history for the past 250+ years.

**Q: How many events do you anticipate a need for staffing?**

A: During the peak of 2026 there will be hundreds of events, mostly put on by others that we will simply promote. We likely won't send staff to these. There will be a strong handful of events for which our team, commission, committees, and volunteers will be involved with.

**Q: Who are available spokespeople at the statewide level? Will any spokespeople need media training?**

A: For the present it is the Executive Director, Todd Kleismit. In the future, we would anticipate having additional spokespeople, depending on the occasion, topic, etc. It is probably fair to say that there may be a need for some media training, but we don't know exactly what we will need at this time.

**Q: How much coordination between states is anticipated?**

A: We are part of a Great Lakes America 250 alliance where we are sharing resources and looking for ways to coordinate with activities, etc. We are also part of a larger consortium of states that is being coordinated by the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH), who is taking a leading role in this work. We are also staying in touch with the national America 250 organization.

**Q: Are you open to having an expense budget to engage prominent local influencers? If so, what is the budget range?**

A: We would be open to having the conversation about working with local influencers if the circumstances are right. We have not identified a budget for it.

**Q: What do you expect the hourly rate to be?**

A: We don't have a set number but would expect it to be fair but being mindful that we are a non-profit with limited funds. We hope the potential PR firm will value the experience and exposure and be willing to provide a reasonable, perhaps slightly below market rate.

**Q: Is there room in the budget to conduct message testing in the form of focus groups, surveys or interviews**

A: We haven't firmed up the budget yet, but we would be interested in using whatever existing data or research we could get first and then add to it, if needed, once we were clear on what we were trying to learn. Having an understanding of our audience(s) will be important.

**Q: Are there preferred vendors for video, graphic design and social media?**

A: We have some relationships that exist for video. We have a graphic designer who created the logo and is doing some design for us currently. We may look for other resources as needed, depending on what we need. For social media, we plan to hire a position in late 2023.

**Q: Is there a theme for Ohio's programming?**

A: How Ohio and Ohioans have contributed to the national narrative for the past 250+ years – and the plus to acknowledge the importance of the Native Americans who lived on the land for thousands of years before the Europeans came. We have ideas on how this will be expressed both for messaging and experience, but it is still being shaped.

**Q: What would be your budget range for outside projects such as video services, paid media or creative services?**

A: We don't yet know what our total budget will be until after the FY '24-25 budget is passed by the legislature and then we will be able to allocate our budget for various activities.

**Q: When do you anticipate to start the program?**

A: For the PR services we anticipate starting in August. For America 250-Ohio experiences, it could be as soon as 2024.

**Q: The list of Preferred Qualities (page 4), as well as the Proposal Evaluation Criteria (page 7), emphasize WBE/MBE Certification. Will any alternative diversity, equity and inclusion information or statistics we provide be considered for points during evaluation?**

A: We would appreciate any understanding of how your team is composed with regard to minority participation. However, it would not be scored as WBE/MBE certification.

**Q: The RFQ/RFP mentions that events/celebrations will take place throughout 2024 through 2026. Can you share any more information about the earliest events or when a schedule of events might be available?**

A: We could see some pilot programs as early as 2024. There will be milestones in 2024 that we will want to acknowledge with social media and may attend events but not likely to be events directly related to AM 250-OH. For a schedule of events availability date - we will start with events for which we have some degree of participation in the planning. For events planned by others, that will unfold throughout the whole campaign period.

**Q: We have reviewed the list of possible services beyond the immediate scope of work (page 4), including video services, media placement services and creative services. To be considered for any of these possible services, will a statement to express interest be sufficient?**

A: Yes. We won't be considering anything beyond PR, but it is always good to know what a firm's capabilities are. We reserve the right to hire the resource of our choice beyond the scope of the RFQ/RFP that we believe best suits the work.

**Q: The Evaluation Criteria on page 8 calls for prior projects from the last five (5) years. The Prior Experience requirement on page 5 calls for projects from the last three (3) years. To guide which projects we include in our proposal, can you please clarify timing?**

A: Thanks for pointing that out. Please provide projects that would have occurred in the last five (5) years.