

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO: 2017-2
Historic License Plate Marketing - Phase 2

The New Jersey Historic Trust is in but not of the Department of Community Affairs. Its mission is to advance historic preservation through education, stewardship and financial investment programs that save our heritage and strengthen our communities. In addition to its role as the primary provider of bricks and mortar grants to NJ's historic properties, the Trust also administers the heritage tourism grant program funded by the Discover NJ History License Plate sales. The Heritage Tourism Taskforce finalized the New Jersey Heritage Tourism Masterplan in 2010. As part of its work, the taskforce established criteria for the Heritage Tourism grant program, the funding for which results from the sales and renewals of the license plate.

More information on the program can be found:

<http://www.njht.org/dca/njht/programs/discover/index.html>

BACKGROUND

The Discover NJ History license plates were first sold in 1988. The initial sales were attributed to word of mouth and support by the history community, since the plates were never professionally marketed. The Discover NJ History license plate was never a major seller in comparison to the seventeen specialty plates, but sales held steady for many years. However, in the past three, there's been a serious decline in sales and renewals, resulting in a corresponding decline in the amount of funding available for the heritage tourism grant program. Internal NJHT efforts at marketing included reaching out to our grantees to ask for assistance in promoting the plate, creating promotional materials for conferences and workshops, placing ads in various program books, and offering VIP parking at our conference for anyone displaying a license plate. A review of all specialty plates' sales figures indicates that most plates –while also declining in revenue – earned more revenue from higher sales volume initially, so the resultant trend may not have as significant a financial impact on funding critical to the plates' mission as the decline in the history license plate sales is having on heritage tourism grants.

In 2016, the Historic Trust engaged Integrated Marketing Services to undertake market research to determine why the sales are low and to gauge public perception. Not surprisingly, the results of the survey indicated the following:

- 1) Lack of awareness about the Discover NJ History plate
- 2) Design and slogan does not call attention to the 'cause'
- 3) Unattractive – image is not easily recognizable, doesn't stand out
- 4) Difficult to purchase a specialty plate

QUALIFICATIONS

The Historic Trust seeks a marketing research consultant/team with five or more years of demonstrated expertise in marketing and market research that have successfully produced results such as increased product sales/public awareness and/or that have resulted in significant or incrementally increased return on marketing investment. The successful consultant/team should also demonstrate experience in working with governmental entities, most relevantly with state programs.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Based on preliminary research, the Historic Trust intends to initiate a marketing plan to ultimately increase sales of the license plate, to engage the public more broadly in heritage tourism, and enhance the public's appreciation for our historic sites.

The Trust is seeking proposals to develop campaign themes and messaging. Ideally, messaging should also seek to cultivate the millennial generation as purchasers.

Proposals should clearly identify the likely tasks to be undertaken, data needs, expected outcomes and clearly articulate what would not be achievable within the project budget. Tasks should be linked to a timeline and suggested payment schedule. The deliverables should include a media package, style guide suitable for print, and web posting.

The Historic Trust estimates this SCOPE OF SERVICES to cost between \$30,000 - \$37,000 and be completed in six to nine months.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

The proposal must include a narrative identifying the methodology and steps needed to achieve the desired information. The project cost proposal should be itemized by the proposed tasks. Any anticipated travel and/or reimbursable expenses should also be itemized. Prices must be guaranteed for nine months following deadline for submission.

The following items should be included in the Proposal:

- Resumes for the individuals that would be principally involved in executing this project;
- proposed timeline;
- client list and references; and
- examples of similar project undertakings.

PROPOSAL DEADLINE & ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Questions about this RFP should be submitted in writing to: Dorothy.guzzo@dca.nj.gov

If selected as the consultant for this RFP, you must provide

- A valid NJ Business Registration certificate
- Registration in NJSTART vendor system
www.njstart.gov
- A current NJ Certificate of Employee Information Report/Affirmative Action Certificate (or provide the State of NJ Employee Information Report and a \$150 check to the NJ Dept. of Treasury to attain a new certification)
- Complete DPA form packet
http://www.nj.gov/treasury/purchase/forms/DPA_Packet.pdf

Proposal with all supporting material should arrive by **4:00 pm on Thursday, May 4, 2017** to:

Hand Delivery:

Dorothy P. Guzzo, Executive Director

New Jersey Historic Trust, 101 South Broad Street, 6th floor, Trenton, NJ 08608

If using US Postal Service:

Dorothy P. Guzzo, Executive Director

New Jersey Historic Trust, PO Box 457, Trenton, NJ 08625

If you anticipate submitting your proposal electronically, we cannot accept attachments of more than 10 MB in size.