Request For Proposals (RFP)
Marketing Consultant

Project Overview

Volunteer NH is seeking a Marketing Strategist to plan and implement activities related to the organization’s fundraising and development goals. This individual will work alongside the VNH staff and Board of Directors, with a close partnership with the organization’s Development Committee. This is expected to be a 90-day project.

Background

Volunteer NH is a nonprofit organization with a mission to promote the tradition of volunteerism and ethic of service in New Hampshire. We support and sponsor national service initiatives and provide training, recognition, and a central site for volunteers and volunteer programs to strengthen their communities.

Volunteer NH:

- Promotes volunteerism throughout New Hampshire - especially through the use of Get Connected, our volunteer matching website.
- Recognizes outstanding volunteer contributions at the annual Spirit of NH Awards ceremony and through initiatives such as Volunteer of the Day social media posts.
- Trains volunteers and volunteer managers at the annual Governor’s Conference on Volunteerism and through partnerships with local organizations.
- Supports local service programs in our role as the State Service Commission, awarding federal funding, monitoring New Hampshire’s AmeriCorps programs, and facilitating collaboration between local AmeriCorps and Senior Corps programs.
- Partners with disaster service organizations to identify and/or train volunteers to meet community needs.

Volunteer NH has a small staff with limited capacity to dedicate the time and effort required to develop and implement a thoughtful and effective marketing plan. We have recently established a Development Committee made up of members of the VNH Board of Directors who have the enthusiasm and dedication to make big strides. The committee is supported in a limited capacity by VNH staff. The organization seeks a Marketing Consultant who can work closely with the Development Committee to help bring their vision to life in a successful and sustainable manner.
Project Focus

Volunteer NH anticipates conducting a two-pronged approach to marketing our organization and the services we provide. One will be focused on increasing the statewide awareness of Volunteer NH and utilization of our services. The other will be focused on establishing and meeting ambitious fundraising goals.

1. Increase statewide awareness of Volunteer NH and utilization of our services

Volunteer NH (in partnership with Granite United Way) provides Get Connected, an online hub for volunteerism in New Hampshire. Volunteers use Get Connected to find nearby opportunities that fit their interests and schedules. Nonprofits use it to attract, manage and report on volunteer activities in their organizations. Needs are searchable and categorized by location, organization and/or focus (such as animals, disaster relief, etc.). The Get Connected website has seen a large increase in traffic since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and efforts are underway to ensure that the platform is being utilized effectively by volunteers and nonprofits alike - increasing the likelihood of a successful volunteer/opportunity match.

Volunteer NH currently oversees a portfolio of 7 AmeriCorps State programs, in which AmeriCorps members provide services to meet critical needs throughout New Hampshire. Volunteer NH administers grant funding to these programs and serves as a steward to other national service resources, including AmeriCorps VISTA and Senior Corps programs. VNH also receives a Volunteer Generation Fund grant with the purpose of developing and/or supporting community-based entities to recruit, manage, and support volunteers.

Volunteer NH also hosts three signature events each year. In this time of uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic, all organizations are faced with the challenge and opportunity to bring many activities online. The shift to virtual events raises the bar for quality because of the overwhelming number of opportunities to choose from. Volunteer NH is excited to reassess and reimagine the possibilities for what our signature events can look like, and to creatively communicate the things that set us apart.

Volunteer NH events include:
- Governor’s Conference on Volunteerism (May)
- VNH Charity Golf Tournament (August)
- Spirit of NH Awards (November)

2. Establish and meet ambitious fundraising and marketing goals

Much of Volunteer NH’s current funding comes from the federal government agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The VNH Development Committee
has expressed interest in securing more non-federal funding for the organization to allow more work outside the scope of national service initiatives and to ensure succession in the event that federal funding is reduced or lost. As such, one goal of the committee and of the consultant will be to determine how the organization builds on non-federal funding sources.

Volunteer NH conducts fundraising activities at several points throughout the year, and has an ongoing donation page on the website year-round. However, VNH staff are severely limited in their ability to dedicate time to supporting the fiscal development of the organization.

In addition, Volunteer NH would like to broaden its marketing effort to have greater name recognition and greater awareness of its programs throughout New Hampshire. Volunteer NH utilizes email and social media to reach its target audience, but the organization is interested in strategizing more effective marketing techniques. Historically, it has been a challenge to stand out amongst the more than 6,500 nonprofits statewide.

Volunteer NH fundraising and marketing opportunities (aside from our signature events) include:
- NH Gives (June)
- Giving Tuesday (November)
- Annual Appeal (November - December)

**Project Activities**

In conducting this work, the consultant will have access to back-end analytics of the VNH website and social media platforms. They will have the opportunity to reach out to users through email and phone, conducting surveys and/or interviews.

The consultant will be key in helping Volunteer NH to design and implement an effective and sustainable marketing and development plan. While the design of the exact strategy will be a joint effort between the consultant, VNH staff and Board of Directors, and our Development Committee, at a minimum we envision the consultant to help:

- Clarify our brand and marketing strategy to improve effectiveness of marketing efforts
- Expand the organization’s online reach by more effectively utilizing social media
- Promote existing and upcoming programs (national service programs; VGF projects), services (Get Connected; national service resources), and events (Governor’s Conference on Volunteerism; VNH Charity Golf Tournament; Spirit of NH Awards) to existing and new audiences
- Increase our credibility in order to attract funders and raise the profile of the organization
- Evaluate and improve upon our existing fundraising strategies (events; NH Gives; annual appeal)
- Identify and implement strategies to effectively engage Board members in fundraising
Deliverables

The consultant will be expected to attend and/or present at 2+ Volunteer NH meetings, which may include full Board of Director meetings, Development Committee meetings, event committee meetings, and/or others as deemed appropriate.

The consultant will meet with project leadership every two weeks for a status update. Discussion will include the design, implementation, and results of evaluation strategies, project plans, progress reports, and a final report.

At a minimum, the evaluation strategies should include:
- Assessment of Volunteer NH’s marketing and development work to date, including strengths and weaknesses
- Analysis of the factors that have had the greatest influence on success to date

At a minimum, the project plans should include:
- Recommendations for improvements to Volunteer NH’s marketing and development work to increase our impact
- A timeline outlining when each aspect of the plan shall take place

At a minimum, the progress reports should include:
- Assessment of consultant work to date, including examples of where project goals were met or exceeded and where project goals were not met

At a minimum, the final report should include:
- Assessment of consultant work to date, including examples of where project goals were met or exceeded and where project goals were not met
- Recommendations for ensuring long-term sustainability of the project activities/outcomes

Qualifications

Qualified candidates will possess the following:
- A strong background in marketing and development
- Experience with a range of evaluation techniques for nonprofit organizations
- Ability to produce quality materials and reports in a timely manner
- An understanding of capacity building needs of New Hampshire nonprofits
- Ability to represent Volunteer NH in a way that conveys the respect we hold for volunteers and volunteer programs, and our intention to strengthen New Hampshire communities through volunteerism
Proposal Format

No specific format is required; however, applicants should include information on the following:

- Knowledge and experience with prior evaluation efforts and marketing/development projects
- Suggested methods to be pursued
- 90-day timeline with expected hours committed
- Project budget for completing work
- Statement of qualifications including resume, supporting letters and/or references
- Examples of previous evaluation and marketing/development work

Timeline and Submission Requirement

Proposals should be received no later than Friday, August 7, 2020. Vetting of proposals and selection of the consultant will take place within the next few weeks, with the work expected to commence in early September.

Please submit all materials via email to: Mikayla Collins, Volunteer NH Program Officer - mikayla@volunteernh.org.

Direct inquiries to Mikayla via email or at 603-271-7200.