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## AGENDA ITEM MEMO

**BOARD MEETING DATE:** December 17, 2024

**TO:** Board Members

**THROUGH:** Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator  
Lauren Munguia, Chief Communications Officer  
Ashley Harden, General Counsel  
Rebecca Trevino, Chief Financial Officer

**FROM:** Kaci Woodrome, Strategic Communications Manager

**SUBJECT:** Statewide Water Awareness Campaign Contract Execution

### **ACTION REQUESTED**

Consider authorizing the Executive Administrator to execute a one-year grant contract with the Texas Water Foundation to develop and implement a statewide water public awareness campaign in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000, with up to four renewal periods, each subject to approval by the Board, for a total maximum contract amount of \$10,000,000.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2023, the 88th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 28 and Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 75 providing for the creation of the Texas Water Fund, a special fund in the state treasury outside the general revenue fund to be administered by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). In addition, SB 30 authorized a one-time, \$1 billion supplemental appropriation of general revenue to the Texas Water Fund, contingent on enactment of SB 28 and approval of SJR 75 by voters. Proposition 6 (the proposition for SJR 75), creating the Texas Water Fund to assist in financing water projects in Texas, passed in November 2023.

SB 28 directs the TWDB to develop and implement a statewide water public awareness program to educate residents about water. The program must take into account the difference in water needs of various geographic regions of the state and complement and support existing local and regional water education or awareness programs. The Texas Water Fund may be used to transfer money to the statewide water public awareness account, a newly created account that will direct funds toward a statewide public awareness program.

#### **Our Mission**

Leading the state's efforts  
in ensuring a secure  
water future for Texas

#### **Board Members**

Brooke T. Paup, Chairwoman | L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Board Member | Tonya R. Miller, Board Member  
Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

### **KEY ISSUES**

In March 2024, the TWDB published a request for applications (RFA), *580-24-RFA-0019 - Statewide Water Awareness Campaign*, requesting applications leading to the possible award of a contract to develop and execute a statewide water awareness campaign in Texas. The RFA stated that the TWDB plans to award up to \$10,000,000 in grants, comprised of up to \$2,000,000 per year for a maximum of 5 years, from funds appropriated to the Texas Water Fund. To be eligible for funding under this grant, an applicant must be a governmental entity or nonprofit organization with an existing or proposed statewide Texas water awareness program or campaign.

The RFA was open for a period of 30 days. It reiterated SB 28 requirements and specified that the campaign must aim to achieve the following goals:

- Increase public awareness and education regarding Texas water resources
- Connect with Texans through strategic, integrated communication methods
- Drive specified behavioral changes through clear calls to action
- Meet campaign goals per established metrics and measures of success and tasks that a grant recipient would be required to complete

In their responses, applicants were required to submit specific information that was considered and scored against the following criteria:

- Experience managing timelines, budget, and creative development and deployment of assets for a public awareness campaign or program
- Experience developing, managing, or facilitating a successful statewide public awareness campaign
- Experience identifying, setting, and tracking relevant metrics of success for a public awareness campaign or program
- Experience working/partnering with entities such as Texas communities, water providers, media, creative agencies, and other organizations to further the mission and goals of a public awareness campaign or program
- Relevant experience in Texas water issues
- Proposed campaign development plan and timeline
- Ability to financially supplement and sustain the statewide water campaign

Two top-scoring applicants were invited to present to the Board during a public work session on June 26. Those same top applicants were subsequently given the opportunity to respond to written comments and questions from the Board's staff. After considering the proposals, presentations to the Board, and responses to staff comments and questions, the Executive Administrator ranked the top applications as follows: 1) Texas Water Foundation and 2) WateReuse Texas.

On October 17, 2024, the Board approved the selection of the Texas Water Foundation as recipient of the Statewide Water Awareness Campaign grant and authorized negotiation of a contract with the Foundation.

Per the RFA, and as outlined in greater detail in the contract, the Texas Water Foundation will be responsible for completing the following tasks under TWDB oversight:

- Develop awareness goals and associated behavioral changes sought
- Develop potential campaign messages and strategies based on goals and research

- Develop and manage implementation of strategic plans, timelines, media plans and placements, and creative assets
- Manage the procurement of and/or partnership with any subcontractors and other campaign partners
- Identify metrics for measurement and set and monitor measurable, time-based goals to demonstrate success and impact of the campaign
- Make future adjustments to the campaign, with TWDB input
- Submit contractually agreed-upon deliverables

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Executive Administrator recommends the Board authorize execution of a one-year grant contract with the Texas Water Foundation to develop and implement a statewide water public awareness campaign in an amount not to exceed \$2,000,000, with up to four renewal periods, each subject to approval by the Board, for a total maximum contract amount of \$10,000,000.

Attachment:

1. 580-24-RFA-0019 - Statewide Water Awareness Campaign

## **REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS**

### **Statewide Water Awareness Campaign**

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) requests applications leading to the possible award of a contract to develop and execute a statewide water awareness campaign in Texas. TWDB plans to award up to \$10 million in grants, comprised of up to \$2 million per year for a maximum of five years, from funds appropriated to the Texas Water Fund by the 88th Texas Legislature and approved by Texas voters in November 2023.

To be eligible for funding under this grant, an applicant must be a governmental entity or nonprofit organization with an existing or proposed statewide Texas water awareness program or campaign.

#### **Summary of the Request for Applications**

Due Date (Closing): April 17, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. CST

Deadline For Questions: April 1, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. CST

TWDB Response to Questions: April 9, 2024

Anticipated Award Date: June 13, 2024

Estimated Total Funding: \$10 million (up to \$2 million per year for a maximum of five years)

Local Match Requirement: N/A

#### **Scope of Project**

An applicant awarded funding must ensure that the water awareness campaign takes into account differences in water needs of various geographic regions of the state; attitudes toward water issues; potential barriers to achieving the campaign goals; and how these factors may shape the messaging and complement and support existing local and regional water education or awareness programs. To receive consideration, campaigns must meet the eligibility criteria and aim to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Increase public awareness and education regarding Texas water resources
- 2) Connect with Texans through strategic, integrated communication methods
- 3) Drive specified behavioral changes through clear calls to action
- 4) Meet campaign goals per established metrics and measures of success

The grant recipient will be required to complete the following tasks:

- A. Develop, execute, and manage the statewide water awareness campaign, including the following:
  - 1. Develop through interactions with TWDB, research, focus groups, and/or other methods
    - the specific primary and secondary awareness goals and the associated behavioral changes sought through the campaign. The TWDB will provide final approval of proposed goals, calls to action, and behavioral changes;
    - the barriers to and public appeals most likely to lead to successful calls to action to create the sought-after behavioral changes. This work could include developing a market research plan and performing data collection on public behaviors, attitudes, and perceptions; evaluation of the data; and reporting on results. Data collected may include, for example, key demographic and psychographic characteristics of the target 'market.' All research data produced will be made publicly available.
  - 2. Develop potential campaign messages and strategies based on the goals and research in Task A and collaborate with TWDB to determine final campaign messaging and strategy. This work will require presenting potential options to TWDB and reworking campaign messaging and/or approaches based on agency feedback. It may also include considering how to incorporate TWDB data visualization and other TWDB information into the campaign strategy.
  - 3. Develop and manage implementation of strategic plans, timelines, media plans and placements, and creative assets including, but not limited to, logos, fonts, multimedia, graphics, etc.
  - 4. Manage the procurement of and/or partnership with any subcontractors and other campaign partners, if any.
  - 5. Identify metrics for measurement and set and monitor measurable, time-based goals at specific intervals to demonstrate success and impact of the campaign.
  - 6. Make future adjustments to the campaign, with TWDB input and approval based on the measurements taken at the scheduled intervals.
- B. Submit contractually agreed-upon deliverables, including but not limited to: research, campaign messaging, creative assets, strategic plans and timelines, quarterly progress reports with metrics, and annual reports throughout the duration of funding.

Applicants should have experience in the following areas:

- A. Managing timelines, budget, and creative development and deployment of assets for a public awareness campaign.
- B. Identifying, setting, and tracking relevant metrics of success for a public awareness campaign.

- C. Working/partnering with entities such as Texas communities, water providers, media, creative agencies, and other organizations to further the mission and goals of a public awareness campaign.

## **How to Apply**

Applicants must submit all information listed below, in the order given, as the response to this RFA. The response will only be considered if all items are submitted as required. Incomplete or late responses to this RFA will not be considered.

- 1) Item 1: Organization profile summary and history. Include the following (*5 pages maximum*):
  - a. Organization name, address, phone number, website, and legal status
  - b. Name and title of person submitting the response with the authority to bind the organization.
  - c. Name, phone number, and email address of contact person for any questions about the response.
  - d. Describe the general nature of the organization, the number of years in business, size, and scope of operation.
- 2) Item 2: Qualifications and experience. Include the following (*5 pages maximum*):
  - a. Qualifications for managing a statewide water awareness campaign, such as
    - i. Experience with such tasks as those outlined in Task A, items 1-6, above.
    - ii. Experience managing timelines, budget, and creative development and deployment of assets for a public awareness campaign.
    - iii. Experience identifying, setting, and tracking relevant metrics of success for a public awareness campaign.
    - iv. Experience working/partnering with entities such as Texas communities, water providers, media, creative agencies, and other organizations to further the mission and goals of a public awareness campaign.
  - b. Bio(s) of person(s) who will manage and support the campaign. Also indicate who the lead individual(s) will be throughout the first two years.
- 3) Item 3: Proposed campaign information:
  - a. Describe the need for funding to meet the goals of this RFA. Include proposed partners and/or subcontractors, if relevant.
  - b. Explain how you will use the funding to develop and execute the public awareness messaging and campaign.
  - c. Provide a proposed timeline for achieving the campaign goals with a focus on tasks occurring during the first two years.
- 4) Item 4: Project budget. (*Note: Payment will be made on a cost reimbursement basis.*)
  - a. Total project budget.

- i. Prepare a draft budget for the project that identifies the proposed project costs by task and category—and year, if applicable. (See example budgets below.)
- ii. Specify any other sources of funding to supplement and sustain this campaign.

5) **Item 5:** (IF APPLICABLE) Supplemental information about applicant's existing statewide awareness program or campaign. Include the following *(5 pages maximum)*:

- a. Goals, audience, key messaging, and desired behavioral changes.
- b. Examples of strategies and tactics.
- c. Metrics and documented program success rate.

Applications must be submitted electronically to [Bid-room@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:Bid-room@twdb.texas.gov) with a copy to Veronica Holmes, [veronica.holmes@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:veronica.holmes@twdb.texas.gov), by the Closing date of April 17, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. CST.

Please include the subject line of **“Public Awareness Campaign RFA.”**

Questions regarding the application may be submitted to: [Bid-room@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:Bid-room@twdb.texas.gov), and a copy to Veronica Holmes, [veronica.holmes@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:veronica.holmes@twdb.texas.gov), and must be received by the Deadline for Questions, April 1, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. CST.

### **Limitations on Use of Funds**

Eligible costs are those directly attributed to the Project, including management, planning, creative development, and implementation. Indirect expenses such as the applicant's overhead are not eligible for reimbursement. Eligible travel expenses of a grant recipient and any subcontractors are limited to the maximum amounts authorized for state employees by the General Appropriations Act. Respondents are responsible for all costs incurred in the preparation and delivery of the application to TWDB.

Grant funds may not be used to support or pay the costs of lobbying; any portion of the salary or any other compensation for an elected government official; the purchase or lease of vehicles; the purchase of recreational activities; the purchase of promotional items, unless specifically approved in writing by TWDB; costs of travel that are unrelated to the direct delivery of services that support the grant; the costs for consultants or vendors who participate directly in writing a grant application; or for any unallowable costs set forth in applicable state or federal law, rules, regulations, guidelines, policies, procedures or cost principles.

## **Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process**

Incomplete applications and those that do not meet the requirements of the application instructions may be eliminated from consideration.

Applications will be scored by a review panel according to the criteria and submission requirements outlined in the application instructions. Additional consideration will be given to those who have experience developing, managing, or facilitating a statewide awareness campaign and to those who have relevant experience in water issues. Top scoring applicants will be invited to present to the Board during a public work session on May 22, 2024. Those applicants will be notified approximately one week in advance. At a separate Board meeting open to the public, the Board will consider approving the Executive Administrator's request to initiate and enter into a contract with one selected applicant.

TWDB reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement. In addition, TWDB reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of a proposed project. Board approval will be required for each annual renewal to approve funding following the first year.

## **Negotiations with Selected Applicant**

The applicable scope of work, deliverables, timeline, budget, and contract terms will be negotiated after TWDB awards the selected applicant. Failure to arrive at mutually agreeable terms of a contract with a selected applicant will constitute a rejection of the grant award and may result in funding being awarded to another applicant.



## SCORING CRITERIA

Points	Criteria
0-25	Experience managing timelines, budget, and creative development and deployment of assets for a public awareness campaign or program.
0-5	Experience developing, managing, or facilitating a successful <i>statewide</i> public awareness campaign.
0-15	Experience identifying, setting, and tracking relevant metrics of success for a public awareness campaign or program.
0-20	Experience working/partnering with entities such as Texas communities, water providers, media, creative agencies, and other organizations to further the mission and goals of a public awareness campaign or program.
0-5	Relevant experience in Texas water issues.
0-20	Proposed campaign development plan and timeline.
0-10	Ability to financially supplement and sustain the statewide water campaign.
<b>Maximum points possible = 100</b>	

**EXHIBIT B**  
**Task and Expense Budgets**

<b>Task Budget</b>		
<b>Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Costs</b>
1		\$0.00
2		\$0.00
3		\$0.00
4		\$0.00
5		\$0.00
<b>Total Study Costs</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>Expense Budget</b>	
<b>Category</b>	<b>Costs</b>
Salaries & Wages <sup>1</sup>	\$0.00
Fringe <sup>2</sup>	\$0.00
Travel <sup>3</sup>	\$0.00
Other Expenses <sup>4</sup>	\$0.00
Equipment, Materials, and Supplies <sup>5</sup>	\$0.00
Subcontract Services	\$0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

<sup>1</sup> Salaries and Wages is defined as the cost of salaries of engineers, draftsmen, stenographers, surveyors, clerks, laborers, etc., for time directly chargeable to this CONTRACT.

<sup>2</sup> Fringe is defined as the cost of social security contributions, unemployment, excise, and payroll taxes, workers' compensation insurance, retirement benefits, medical and insurance benefits, sick leave, vacation, and holiday pay applicable thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Travel is limited to the maximum amounts authorized for state employees by the General Appropriations Act, Tex. Leg. Regular Session, 2019, Article IX, Part 5, as amended or superseded

<sup>4</sup> Other Expenses is defined to include expendable supplies, communications, reproduction, postage, and costs of public meetings directly chargeable to this CONTRACT.

<sup>5</sup> Equipment, Materials, and Supplies is defined as all hardware, software, and technology directly chargeable to this contract; those items that are incorporated into and remain part of a feature or structure; and, those items that are used during the installation and construction process, but do not remain a permanent part of the feature or structure.