

Request for Proposal

DUBLIN IRISH FESTIVAL MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Release Date: September 25, 2026

Due Date: October 16, 2026

I. Statement of Purpose

The City of Dublin is seeking proposals from qualified firms to serve as the lead marketing and communications agency for the 2027 Dublin Irish Festival. The selected firm will develop a comprehensive, integrated marketing and communications plan for the Festival and its 40th anniversary and, upon City approval, coordinate and execute designated components of that plan in partnership with City staff and other Festival marketing partners.

The goal of this RFP is to select a firm that can provide overarching strategic direction, strengthen coordination across paid, earned and creative efforts, and establish clear roles, budgets, timelines and measures of success for the 2027 campaign.

Respondents are not expected to develop or submit a complete marketing and communications plan or speculative creative campaign as part of this proposal. Proposals should demonstrate the firm's understanding of the assignment, qualifications, proposed approach, team, schedule and fee structure.

II. Scope of Work

The anticipated contract period is Dec. 1, 2026, through Aug. 31, 2027, with an option to renew for an additional two (2) one-year terms. The work is expected to occur in two phases.

Phase 1: Integrated Marketing and Communications Plan

Anticipated timing: Dec. 1, 2026, through early 2027, with initial 40th anniversary creative direction developed in December 2026. The selected firm will develop a comprehensive, integrated marketing and communications plan for the 2027 Dublin Irish Festival. The plan should include:

- Overarching marketing and communications strategy for the 40th anniversary year.
- Target audiences and priority geographic markets.
- 40th anniversary campaign theme/tagline and anniversary creative direction, including an anniversary mark or graphic treatment. The primary Dublin Irish Festival logo will not be redesigned or replaced.
- Campaign creative strategy and recommendations for promotional assets.
- Paid media strategy and recommended media mix, budget and timing.
- Local and regional earned media strategy. Local media relations will be executed by the City of Dublin; regional media relations should be assigned to the selected firm as part of Phase 2.
- Influencer, sponsored-content and partnership recommendations, as appropriate.
- Recommended marketing channels and tactics, including paid social. Organic social media strategy, content creation, community management and publishing are not part of the selected firm's scope.
- Integrated implementation calendar.
- Performance measures and methods for evaluating the effectiveness of individual tactics and the overall campaign.



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- Detailed campaign budget that distinguishes professional/service fees, paid media expenditures, influencer or sponsored-content costs and other anticipated out-of-pocket expenses.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for the selected firm, the City of Dublin and other Festival marketing partners.

Phase 1 budget: The City anticipates a budget of \$15,000 to \$25,000 for development of the integrated marketing and communications plan. Respondents should provide a fixed fee for Phase 1 and clearly identify what is included in that fee.

Phase 2: Implementation and Campaign Management

Anticipated timing: Following City approval of the Phase 1 plan through Aug. 31, 2027.

Subject to City approval of the Phase 1 plan, scope and budget, the selected firm will lead and coordinate implementation of the approved marketing and communications plan. Phase 2 services will include the following, as applicable to the final approved plan:

- Campaign creative development and graphic design, including items such as posters, digital assets, brochures, print and digital advertisements and paid social graphics.
- Paid media planning, placement and campaign management, including campaign setup, ad creation, copywriting, tracking setup, spend monitoring, optimization, performance analysis and reporting.
- Regional media relations and outreach in priority markets identified in the approved plan.
- Influencer and sponsored-content coordination, as applicable.
- Creative and copywriting support for approved paid campaigns.
- Coordination with City staff, Visit Dublin and other Festival marketing partners to support a cohesive campaign and avoid duplication of efforts.
- Monthly performance reports summarizing completed activities, expenditures, results against established performance measures and recommended adjustments.
- A final comprehensive performance report summarizing campaign performance, results by tactic, key learnings and recommendations for future Festival marketing efforts.

THE CITY OF DUBLIN will provide:

- Relevant Festival background information and planning materials.
- Recent ticket sales, guest, marketing and campaign analytics available to the City.
- Available Festival photography, video and existing creative assets.
- Applicable City of Dublin and Dublin Irish Festival brand standards and guidelines.
- Primary City contacts to oversee the contract and coordinate City-owned communications channels.
- City-led local media relations, organic social media publishing and video content creation and editing.

The selected firm will coordinate its work with these City-led efforts and other Festival marketing partners to maintain an integrated campaign.

Phase 2 budget: The City anticipates a total budget of \$100,000-\$125,000 for Phase 2 implementation. This budget is intended to cover all costs associated with execution of the approved marketing and communications plan, including agency professional fees, campaign management, graphic design and creative production, advertising and paid media placement, paid search and paid social, influencer and sponsored-content activities, and other recommended campaign tactics and out-of-pocket expenses. Respondents should describe their proposed fee structure for Phase 2 and identify applicable agency fees, hourly rates, retainers, media management fees or other charges. The Phase 1 plan will recommend how the total Phase 2 budget should be allocated among these services and tactics.

III. Minimum Criteria for Proposer:

- At least five (5) years of current experience providing and managing integrated marketing, communications, public relations and/or paid media services on behalf of clients.
- Demonstrated ability and expertise to fulfill the services described in this RFP.
- Demonstrated experience managing integrated campaigns involving multiple marketing partners and stakeholders.
- Demonstrated experience developing, executing and measuring paid media campaigns.

- Experience marketing festivals, events, destinations or other attendance-based experiences is preferred.

IV. Term and Contractual Conditions

The contract resulting from this solicitation is anticipated to begin Dec. 1, 2026, and continue through Aug. 31, 2027, with an option to renew for an additional two (2) one-year terms.

The City intends to select a firm to complete Phase 1 and, subject to City approval of the resulting plan, scope and budget, continue with Phase 2 implementation. The City may modify the Phase 2 scope based on recommendations developed during Phase 1 and available budget.

Either party may terminate the agreement upon 30 days' written notice. The selected firm will be required to sign a contract with the City of Dublin governing the services provided under this RFP.

V. Proposal Response Format

Proposals should be organized in the following order:

- 1) **Cover Letter and Executive Summary.** Demonstrate the respondent's understanding of the assignment and overall approach to serving as the lead marketing and communications agency for the 2027 Dublin Irish Festival.
- 2) **Agency Overview and Core Capabilities.** Provide an overview of the firm, relevant capabilities and areas of specialization.
- 3) **Relevant Experience.** Provide examples of comparable work, particularly integrated event, tourism, destination or attendance-based marketing campaigns. Include two to three relevant case studies and describe measurable results where available.
- 4) **Proposed Team.** Identify the individuals who will be assigned to the project, their roles and relevant experience. Identify any proposed subcontractors or partner agencies and describe their anticipated responsibilities.
- 5) **Approach to the Assignment.** Describe the proposed process for developing an integrated marketing and communications strategy, establishing campaign priorities and coordinating implementation across multiple organizations and agency partners. Respondents are not expected to develop the actual 2027 marketing plan or speculative creative as part of this proposal.
- 6) **Schedule.** Provide a proposed work plan and schedule for Phase 1, including the firm's ability to develop initial 40th anniversary creative direction in December 2026 and complete the integrated marketing and communications plan in early 2027.
- 7) **Measurement and Reporting.** Describe the firm's approach to establishing performance measures, monitoring campaign performance and reporting results.
- 8) **Cost Proposal.** Provide a fixed fee for Phase 1 and a proposed fee structure for Phase 2. Clearly distinguish professional fees from media expenditures and other anticipated out-of-pocket costs. For Phase 2, respondents should describe how agency fees would be structured within the City's anticipated \$125,000 to \$150,000 implementation budget.

Assumptions and Agreements

- The selected firm will assign one primary point of contact to manage all areas of the contract.
- Any subcontractors or partner agencies proposed by the selected firm must be identified to and approved by the City. The selected firm will remain responsible for coordinating and managing all work performed under its contract.
- At the conclusion of the contract, all materials developed for the City will become the exclusive property of the City and will be provided to City staff in final and editable/source formats, as applicable.
- Invoices must clearly identify professional fees, approved out-of-pocket expenses and media expenditures, as applicable.
- The selected firm will be required to execute the City of Dublin's formal agreement for services.

VI. Proposal Submission

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted electronically to Erin Santa, Events Coordinator, at esanta@dublin.oh.us.

Questions must be received by 4 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9, 2026. Responses to questions will be shared with prospective proposers.

All proposals must be received via email **no later than 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 16, 2026**, at esanta@dublin.oh.us. The City anticipates reviewing proposals and, if needed, conducting follow-up conversations with selected respondents prior to final selection.

VII. Award Selection Criteria

- Demonstrated understanding of the assignment and the Dublin Irish Festival marketing opportunity.
- Demonstrated success with similar projects and scopes of work.
- Quality and strategic strength of the proposed approach.
- Demonstrated ability to integrate paid, earned and creative strategies and coordinate effectively with multiple partners.
- Experience measuring marketing performance and using results to optimize campaigns.
- Qualifications and relevant experience of the proposed project team.
- Ability to meet the City's schedule and key deliverables.
- Overall value and total proposed cost.

The City may request clarification or additional information from respondents and may conduct interviews or discussions as part of the selection process.