



**MMG**

MERIDIAN MANAGEMENT GROUP, INC.

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MARKETING SERVICES

**Meridian Management Group, Inc.**

826 E. Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, MD 21202

410-333-2548  
May 11, 2022

## 1. SUMMARY

Meridian Management Group, Inc. (“MMG”) is a minority-owned, Maryland-based investment fund management firm that provides debt and equity financing to small businesses, minority-owned and women-owned businesses primarily in the state of Maryland. MMG is inviting proposals from qualified companies/vendors for the following consulting services (the “Project”):

- Marketing Strategy: Advice on traditional and digital strategies, including social media, to increase applications for financing to MMG from qualified candidates and increase brand awareness.
- Content Creation: Review and revise traditional and digital marketing content regarding MMG products and services.
- Website Update/Redesign: Design, develop and host new website.

*Vendors may apply to any or all the services requested, indicating whether they would be partnering with other companies or professionals and/or utilizing subcontractors.*

## 2. PROPOSAL

This Request for Proposal (“RFP”) may be obtained at the MMG website:

[www.mmcapitalgroup.com](http://www.mmcapitalgroup.com)

All questions must be submitted by email to [robin.harris@mmcapitalgroup.com](mailto:robin.harris@mmcapitalgroup.com) by 5pm ET on May 25, 2022. MMG will respond to questions as quickly as possible.

Timeline:

RFP released:	May 9, 2022
FINAL PROPOSAL DUE:	June 7, 2022
Contract Award Anticipated	June 21, 2022

MMG may hold interviews with finalist as part of the selection process. Interviews will be held via Microsoft Teams or similar virtual platform.

Proposals received after 5:00pm ET June 7, 2022, will not be considered. However, MMG may decide to extend the submission deadline for all vendors if it is determined that the timeframe is inadequate. An addendum to the RFP may be released and will be posted on the MMG website.

You may submit alternate solutions as part of your proposal.

The price you quote should be all inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

Your proposal must clearly indicate if the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. **MMG prefers that the project be led by one prime contractor providing a single point of contact and coordination with the other vendors.** MMG retains the right to refuse any sub-contractor(s) you have selected.

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***MINORITY-OWNED AND WOMEN-OWNED COMPANIES  
ARE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL***

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### 3. CONTRACT TERMS

MMG will award contracts to the vendor(s) whose proposal is responsive to the RFP and deemed by MMG to be the most highly advantageous and in our best interest. Lowest bidder is a consideration, but not the only determining factor. The evaluation will identify those proposals which offer the best combination of expertise and value.

MMG will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by MMG's legal counsel, and the project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement which outlines terms, scope, budget, etc.

### 4. OVERVIEW, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

#### Overview MMG

MMG is a minority-owned, Maryland-based investment fund management firm that provides debt and equity financing to small businesses, minority-owned and women-owned businesses (collectively "SMWBEs") primarily in the state of Maryland. MMG's mission is to create wealth via the efficient deployment of capital to under-served markets.

State of Maryland Financing Programs: MMG has a contract with the Maryland Department of Commerce ("Commerce") to manage two of its financing programs. MMG has managed the highly successful Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority ("MSBDFA") for more than 25 years, and the Maryland Casino Business Investment Fund ("MCBIF") for 9 years. Over 95% of MMG's lending and investment activity has been through the MSBDFA and MCBIF programs.

MMG has funded more than \$275 million in Maryland-based SMWBEs. MMG's management team has deep expertise in the SMWBE market and a proven track record of success. MMG provides management and technical assistance as an integral part of its underwriting and portfolio management process.

Community Development Ventures ("CDV"): MMG also managed CDV for 22 years. CDV was formed in 1997 as a 501(c)(4) not-for-profit business investment company with a mission to support SMWBEs, including those located in low to moderate income ("LMI") markets in Maryland. MMG anticipates reactivating CDV's certification as a Community Development Financial Institution ("CDFI") and begin lending activities in Q4 2022.

Morgan Advisory Group: Morgan Advisory Group provides strategic management consulting services to SMWBEs.

Constituent Groups: MMG has 4 distinct constituent groups that it must market to and inform: (1) SMWBEs, (2) other banks, lenders, investors and sureties that may provide additional financing to SMWBEs that MMG is financing (collectively "Co-Finance Partners"), (3) elected officials and governmental agencies (e.g., Maryland Governor and state and local legislators, county economic development agencies), and (4) business affiliate and trade organizations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, minority and women business organizations, etc.).

Target SMWBEs: MMG targets Maryland-based SMWBEs that meet the definition of a "small business" as defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration. While the definition is subject to the particular industry in which the company participates, generally a small business is one with no more than 1,500 employees and a maximum of \$41.5 million in revenue. MMG also specializes in financing Maryland-based SMWBEs that are unable to access traditional financing (e.g., bank loan) at reasonable rates.

State Small Business Credit Initiative ("SSBCI"): The MSBDFA program expects to receive a significant increase in funding from an allocation of federal funds to Maryland through the SSBCI program at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. While the MSBDFA funding from the SSBCI program will still be targeted at SMWBEs, the requirements to receive the SSBCI funding versus the standard MSBDFA program funds have material variations from each other. It is critical MMG communicate these differences to its Constituent Groups.

## Overview - the Project

MMG seeks to strengthen its current marketing practices to promote MMG as an ideal source of financing for Maryland-based SMWBEs. MMG wants to market its' products and services in a cost effective and efficient way that leads to an increase in applications for financings from SMWBEs likely to qualify for MMG financing.

Marketing efforts resulting in sustained deal flow and brand awareness has been an ongoing challenge for MMG. MMG needs assistance identifying, implementing and sustaining new

strategies to increase its applications for financing and brand awareness. It must also refine and develop new content (digital and traditional) to ensure its product offerings and its value proposition are clearly understood by its constituents. MMG views an improved website and digital content/social media strategy is critical to achieving an increase in deal flow and brand awareness. You may review the current MMG website at [www.mmcapitalgroup.com](http://www.mmcapitalgroup.com)

## 5. THE PROJECT

The Project has 3 components: (A) Marketing Strategy, (B) Content Creation and (C) Website Update/Redesign (each a “Project Component”). Additional detail about each Project Component is set forth below.

### A. Marketing Strategy:

MMG seeks a vendor to develop a cost effective yet comprehensive marketing strategy (both traditional and digital marketing including social media). Overall services are to include:

- Development of digital and traditional marketing strategy with suggested budget expenditures and for future budgeting purposes, to market, to promote and educate the Constituent Groups and the general public about MMG and its financing products;
- SEO strategy including suggested website content and key words and metrics to evaluate effectiveness of strategy;
- Create and advise on strategies regarding outreach via e-mail, social media (e.g., frequency of postings, suggested topics) a newsletter and blogging as appropriate to maximize outreach and connect with the Constituent Groups;
- On-going support: MMG requests that the vendor also include in their proposal the cost of on-going support preferably in the form of an hourly rate and estimated monthly cost related to evaluation of the effectiveness of the overall marketing strategy and its execution and advise staff.

### B. Content Creation

The successful vendor will work with MMG to create content to promote MMG and its various products and programs. Examples include, but are not limited to the following: content for website, traditional and digital marketing materials, product summaries, etc. This may also include MMG logo and other graphic redesigns.

On-going support: MMG requests that the vendor also include in their proposal the cost of such on-going support preferably in the form of an hourly rate and estimated monthly cost related to social media posts and website posts (e.g., stories about recently closed deals).

### C. Website Update/Redesign

MMG will work with the successful vendor to create/provide website copy. A firm that can handle all site planning, interface design and production is required. The site must include a technology solution that allows the MMG staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify the site after the initial launch.

- The site must provide links to social media sites that are to be recommended by the vendor in conjunction with MMG staff.
- The site should contain web analytic tools to help us better understand and measure web visitor behavior and improve web site performance and availability (e.g., web traffic analysis, page views, top pages, page length of stay, etc.) This may be offered through hosting service.
- On-going support: MMG requests that the vendor also include in their proposal the cost of such on-going support preferably in the form of an hourly rate and estimated monthly cost related to website maintenance and modifications. If the vendor does not provide hosting services, please submit the name of a vendor/partner that can provide such services.

## 6. RFP EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please submit one proposal if you are bidding on multiple items and include information regarding subcontractors. The minimum general proposal requirements include:

- Qualifications and experience of the project team
- Demonstrated understanding of scope of work and suggested approach to project
- Artistry based on prior portfolio submitted with three (3) samples of prior projects
- Capacity to perform work within schedule and budget
- Billing rates, hourly, to remain in effect for the duration of the project
- Any additional terms or conditions to which the parties may agree
- Please provide three references.

Virtual meetings or conference calls may be requested of proposing vendors during the evaluation period. Be advised that these are minimum requirements, and MMG is receptive to innovative ideas and value-added concepts provided in the proposal that will be considered and evaluated as part of the selection process.

## 7. PROPOSAL EVALUATION

Proposals will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- Suitability of the Proposal - the proposed solution(s) meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.

- Candidate Experience - Vendor has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project. Vendor experience working with a financial services firm is preferred but not required.
- Website Design - Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user-friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels - The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposing vendor.
- Depth and Breadth of Staff - The vendor, including any subcontractors, has appropriate staff to complete the Project in a timely manner.
- Estimated timing and schedule to complete the Project and demonstrated capacity to meet such timing.
- Client References - The vendor has good references from recent clients on similar projects.

MMG reserves the right to request additional information or clarification from a submitting vendor regarding the specifics of the proposal, negotiate modifications, reject all proposals, and waive informalities or irregularities in a proposal, split or make the award in any manner most advantageous to MMG in its' sole discretion. MMG prefers that the project be led by one prime contractor providing a single point of contact and coordination with any other vendors.

## 8. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Please use the following as a guideline to format your proposal:

### **Length and Font Size:**

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications and work plan and budget should not exceed 35 pages.

### **Title Page:**

MMG Marketing Consulting Proposal, your company name, address, website address, general office telephone number, and e-mail address and direct dial phone number for primary contact person.

### **Cover Letter:**

Summary Letter Submission of the "Statement of Work" engagement letter will constitute a representation by your firm that your firm is willing and able to perform the commitments contained in the proposal. The letter must clearly identify those components of the Project (i.e., marketing strategy, content development, update/redesign of website) your firm is proposing a solution. The letter must be signed by a person authorized by your firm to obligate your firm to perform the commitments contained in the proposal.

**Proposal:**

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. Your proposal should discuss separately how you would address each Project Component addressing the Project tasks set forth in Section 5.

**Qualifications:**

Provide the information requested below.

**General**

- Provide a company profile listing core competencies and length of time in business.
- How many full-time staff and part-time staff does your firm employ? How many contractors?
- Discuss any previous projects your company has worked on with any subcontractor(s) that you are proposing to work with on this Project. Discuss how your firm would manage any subcontractors used in this Project. Provide the name, address, and EIN of any sub-contractor you intend to have work on this Project.
- Please identify each key individual and describe their role in the overall management of this Project and for each Project Component: Marketing Strategy, Content Creation and Website Update/Redesign. Identify the proposed project manager who will be responsible for the day-to-day execution of the Project and his or her relevant experience in leading similar efforts. Please include a brief background summary for each key individual.
- Time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the Project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of any final agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested. MMG prefers the Project be completed in an expeditious manner.
- Provide contact information, including name, organization, address, phone number, and email, for at least four (4) references for projects, preferably of a similar scope and size. For each reference, provide a brief summary of the nature of the work and the outcomes of the engagement.
- Please provide any terms or conditions you would like to include in any final agreement that have not been addressed in this RFP.

### Marketing Strategy

- Discuss your company's experience in developing marketing strategies which resulted in an increase in the client's customers and revenue. Please provide specific details and data to support any claims of increase in customers and revenue.
- Provide the percentage of your staff and of staff time that would be working on this Project. Discuss your company's capacity to execute this Project given the timetable in an efficient manner.

### Content Creation

Please provide examples (no more than 5) of work done where your company conceived and drafted the content. It is preferred if you can show work from a single campaign with examples of digital and traditional content.

### Website Update/Redesign

- Describe your experience in producing websites for corporations.
- List the four websites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- Please discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.

### Work Plan and Budget

The proposal should contain a detailed description of the activities to be conducted by your company to complete the requested scope of work of the Project, including:

- The specific activities to be conducted at each stage,
- A timeline for the activities at each stage,
- Milestones and deliverables tied to those activities, and
- A detailed budget for each task, along with a proposed payment schedule tied to project milestones and/or deliverables.

## **9. OWNERSHIP AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

All deliverables including code, data, schematics, research, flow charts, notes, outline, formulae, processes, algorithms, text, graphics, video, source code, editorial content and the like used in connection with the Project will become the sole property of MMG and may be used for any purpose including but not limited to posting, disclosure, reproduction, broadcast, and transmission. MMG may use any concepts, ideas or techniques for any reason or purpose whatsoever including but not limited to developing and marketing services or applications using such data. The vendor shall further agree to keep any confidential information or proprietary business information in strict confidence.