

BALTIMORE

OFFICE OF PROMOTION & THE ARTS

December 3, 2018

The Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts (BOPA) is seeking a marketing and communications partner to build a communications program for the organization. We invite proposals from interested marketing agencies with experience in brand development and management; marketing; social media strategy, implementation, and management; website design and development; media planning and outreach. Experience with the arts, festivals, events, and/or cultural tourism is strongly preferred. Agencies providing a broad range of services are desired, but if you plan to submit with a collaborative partner, or using subcontractors, please be specific in your submission.

The engagement with BOPA will encompass all facets of our work, and will be multi-phased. Details of the anticipated phases are outlined later in this letter. At a high level, they will involve:

- Repackaging BOPA using current brand pillars as a bridge to a full rebrand in 2020.
- Developing campaign plans and assets for local, regional, national and international awareness building and audience reach.
- Building marketing and communications plans for the recently announced alignment of the Baltimore Book Festival and Light City into a one-of-a-kind event, set to take place November 1-10, 2019.

Key Attributes of our Marketing Partner

The ideal partner for this engagement is a communications agency with experience in arts/events/tourism marketing and the ability to simultaneously accomplish the following:

- Creativity and imagination to align our wide-ranging activities in a compelling, unified framework
- A sensitivity to the cultural nuances of arts and the community in Baltimore
- Ability to build national marketing programs for BOPA
- The ability to shift from creation to campaign execution as we progress through 2019/2020
- Focus on re-use of existing assets wherever possible
- Be a positive, collaborative partner with the agility to shift gears during the year, based on the scheduling of key programs and events

Selection Timing:

Information calls with the BOPA team	Week of December 10, 2018 (by appointment; to schedule a call please email khornig@promotionandarts.org)
Indicate intention to submit	December 14, 2018
Proposals due	December 21, 2018
Finalists announced	Week of January 1, 2019
In-person presentations	Week of January 14, 2019
Selected partner announced	January 22, 2019
Work commences	February 1, 2019

BOPA: Background

BOPA is a standalone 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that produces or organizes almost every fun, free city-wide event in Baltimore. BOPA also serves as Baltimore City's official arts council, events agency, and film office. BOPA uplifts Baltimore's creative community through funding and support to artists, arts programs and organizations across the city.

BOPA is an exceptional producer of large-scale events such as Light City, Artscape and the Baltimore Book Festival. BOPA promotes the culinary arts through its management of the Baltimore Farmers' Market & Bazaar. It produces New Year's Eve and July 4th celebrations at the Inner Harbor, School 33 Art Center's Open Studio Tour; Free Fall Baltimore, and the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Parade.

As the city's arts council, BOPA provides opportunities for artists to showcase work through the Public Art Program, Baltimore Mural Program, Community Arts Grants and various Calls for Artists; engages the next generation of artists through the arts education programs Art@Work, Bright StArts and BOPA Youth Arts Council; and collaborates with cultural organizations and neighborhood groups through a myriad of other programming.

Additionally, as the Baltimore Film Office, BOPA provides service to all productions scouting and filming in Baltimore. BOPA oversees historic attractions and sites including the Top of the World Observation Level, School 33 Art Center, The Cloisters, and the Bromo Seltzer Arts Tower.

Over the past 30+ years, BOPA has been called upon to orchestrate or assist with large-scale city events. The activities include Star-Spangled Spectacular in 2014, NFL Kick-Off in 2013, Star-Spangled Sailabration in 2012 and the Ravens Super Bowl Victory Parades.

Addressing Challenges

The varied palette of BOPA activities is not unified from a marketing perspective, nor is it understood or appreciated for its scale and impact on Baltimore. This hinders our ability to build value in our brand, to be appreciated for the role we play as an anchor institution in Baltimore, and to raise the funds necessary to maintain our diverse programming and commitment to excellence.

BOPA has recently announced a new CEO, [Donna Sawyer](#), who takes the reins at an exciting moment of growth and transition. Under her leadership and a newly aligned management team,

BOPA has already taken several major steps forward toward a reimagined BOPA and a series of strategies to address the hindrances noted above.

Among decisions that have already been taken:

- Merge Light City and Baltimore Book Festival, and recognize the combined festival as both Baltimore's and BOPA's signature event in terms of potential national and international audiences
- Offer some ticketed activities at BOPA free events
- Pursue other earned revenue opportunities
- Align all activities more fully under BOPA brand, in an arc from the opening of the Baltimore Farmers' Market & Bazaar in April through New Year's Eve
- Integrate BOPA more fully into the arts, culture and innovation communities

Improved communications and marketing is an urgent need

We have done work over the last several months to develop brand pillars to scaffold an energized marketing and communication architecture, and have made several significant operational decisions to increase efficiency and impact without compromising programming.

We envision a series of communications progressions through 2019 and into early 2020, leading to a full-scale rebrand (name, logo, etc.) in 2020. The timing for the rebrand is anchored by several significant milestones that take place in 2020: the anniversaries of Baltimore Book Festival (25 years) and Light City (5 years). The year 2020 also marks the 15th anniversary of the Janet & Walter Sondheim Artscape Prize.

A critical objective of this process is to expand BOPA's reach overall, and the Light City/Baltimore Book Festival audience, in particular, from its regional audience today, to a mega-regional audience in 2019, to a national and ultimately international draw for Baltimore in 2020 and beyond.

Key brand frameworks/decisions made to date

As we move toward a full rebrand in 2020, we have aligned around frameworks that will form the basis of our initial marketing. The work that has already been done around these brand foundations will allow us to launch quickly, and provide a bridge to the full rebrand.

The following are decisions we have made through an initial strategy process, so we can get a fast start with our marketing partner:

- Keep BOPA name and logo as is for 2019, but both are on the table for 2020
- Build a marketing plan for an arc of activities from the launch of Baltimore Farmers' Market & Bazaar in April, through New Year's fireworks at year end.
- Build branding around four art disciplines: Visual, Literary, Performing and Culinary
- Tagline: Arts Illuminated
- Our 'why': Arts are a catalyst for innovation, engagement, creativity and action
- What we believe: Arts shine a light on the soul of communities
- Light City/Baltimore Book Festival combination:
 - Name: Light City. Sub-brand: Baltimore Book Festival at Light City
 - Both logos will be present in 2019, but colors, potentially fonts aligned.

- New tagline for Light City: A Festival of Light & Literature

Our audiences

Baltimore-centric activities:

- Baltimore and surrounding counties
- Families
- Festival/art/music/food lovers
- Artists and arts community
- Key partners

Light City/BBF An event of this caliber has the potential for mega-regional reach in 2019, and national/international reach in 2020 and beyond.

- Geographical reach 2019: Atlanta to Boston; Ohio to the west
- Additional target cities: Chicago, Nashville, Memphis, Austin
- Literary arts (booksellers, writers groups, book clubs, readers, writers)
- Ideas conference devotees
- Art cognoscenti
- Light Art community (US and international)
- Art tourists
- Families looking for culturally enriching, authentic experiences
- Thought leaders

How we'll measure success

We'll measure success through both quantitative and qualitative measures of progress for BOPA, as outlined below. We'll work with our marketing partner to identify resources to measure the results of our collaboration.

- An umbrella brand that seamlessly aligns all of BOPA's activities
- Awareness of BOPA's role in producing events that uplift and provide economic impact to Baltimore
- Recognition of BOPA as an anchor institution in our community
- Strong buy-in from Baltimore that BOPA is a positive partner and collaborator with the arts community
- Attendance at events
- Mega-regional and national attendance at Light City/BBF
- Light City/BBF recognized alongside the leading festivals in the world
- Increased support for BOPA from philanthropy, companies, and individuals in Baltimore
- Increased support for LC/BBF from national sponsors

Anticipated phases of work 2019

1. Discovery, Timelines, Foundation-building
2. Initial aligned BOPA brand and brand assets tying together all activities
3. Potential website update of LC/BBF (see submission details)
4. Refresh of LC/BBF brands to bring together
5. Prioritization of key activities around Light City/BBF:

Phase 1: Theme for locals 1+1=5

Description - Reassuring Baltimore and building for expanded reach

- Asset development
- Graphic identity
- Tagline/s
- Message points
- Templates
- Branding guide
- Sponsorship deck/s
- Webinar for publishers
- Staff training
- *Potential website revamp (see submission requirements)*

Phase 2: Delivering the Goods

Description - Going to market with big things to announce by early June!

- Headline Authors & Hot Topics
- Visual Arts Installations
- Concert Headliners
- Neighborhood Lights

Phase 3: Plan Your Visit

All the details - be here November 1-10, 2019 or have FOMO!

- Complete schedules
- Enhancement packages
- Consumer itineraries
- Ad buys

Phase 4: End of summer...It's Showtime!

- Leverage Free Fall Baltimore marketing into LC/BBF
- Light City/ Baltimore Book Festival

Build on Efforts of Key Partners

- Downtown Partnership
- International Light Art Festivals
- Live Baltimore
- Mayoral Convening
- Visit Baltimore (tour bus operators, travel media/writers/bloggers)
- Waterfront Partnership
- WJZ-TV (CBS)

Fun Hooks

- October – Arts & Humanities Month
- November 1 – National Authors' Day
- November – National Write Your Novel Month
- Visiting NFL fans

Additional phases of work 2020

Rebrand

National/international marketing program

Website overhaul, unifying all programs under newly branded umbrella

Submitting your proposal

1. Company profile
 - a. Name of the business, lead contact person, and contact information
 - b. Statement of ownership: Describe the type of business entity (sole proprietorship, corporation, LLC, or other), and list the majority and minority owners. Note if you are an WBE/MBE.
 - c. List of partners/subcontractors. If applicable, provide company name(s), contact person, address, and telephone number, and nature of work to be performed by any subcontractor or collaborator.
2. Qualifications
 - a. Provide a description of your firm, including its founding and history; number of employees; service areas; and, awards or other forms of recognition.
 - b. Provide a description of your work process.
 - c. Describe the firm's experience with and knowledge of the arts, tourism or festivals.
 - d. Identify the team that will work on this project and their specific responsibilities and experiences.
3. Approach to the work
 - a. Describe the approach your firm would undertake to successfully complete the tasks and achieve the goals described above.
 - b. Provide examples of relevant work and / or case studies.
 - c. Discuss your budget, pricing and billing method: Hourly/retainer/project etc. Describe the approximate number of months/monthly hours it may take your firm to meet our needs and what percentage of total available capacity this may represent.
 - d. Please provide pricing both with and without a website revamp for Light City/Baltimore Book Festival in 2019.
 - e. Please articulate your availability to meet our timeline
4. Client references
 - a. Please provide three relevant references with contact information
5. Wow us.
 - a. Get creative. Include additional materials, videos, images, experiences that will add to our understanding of why you are the right partner for BOPA.

Thank you very much for your interest in working with BOPA.

Sincerely,



Donna Drew Sawyer
Chief Executive Officer



Kathleen A. Hornig
Chief Operating Officer
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