**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

**PROJECT NAME:** **Strategic Communications Plan and Implementation for Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Research at Old Dominion University**

**INTRODUCTION:**

The Old Dominion University Office of Research seeks a professional services firm or an individual to be responsible for working with Old Dominion University (ODU) faculty and leadership to develop a strategic communications plan for coastal adaptation and resilience research and then begin implementation of that plan on a task order basis.

**BACKGROUND:**

Old Dominion University is a forward-focused research university located in Norfolk, Virginia of over 24,000 students with rigorous academics, an energetic residential community, entrepreneurial research and collaboration, and initiatives that contribute nearly $2.6 billion annually to Virginia's economy.

Located in a natural testbed between two branches of the Elizabeth River, Old Dominion University’s faculty are national leaders in coastal adaptation and resilience research, outreach, and education particularly in the areas of sea level rise and climate science, flooding and the built environment, and social sciences, public policy, and health dimensions of coastal resilience. As communities across the nation, and particularly along the East Coast face challenges due to rising seas, ODU seeks to share this resilience research with a wider audience.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

*Objectives:*

The objectives of the Strategic Communications Plan and Implementation for Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Research will focus upon the following core tasks:

* Develop communications strategies and plans aimed at conveying the coastal adaptation and resilience outreach, education, and research at ODU.
* Implement the strategies and plans increasing the understanding and perception of ODU’s work via written media alerts, press releases and media placements, feature stories, video vignettes, and other outreach materials.
* Design outreach and marketing materials designed to inspire, engage, and increase public knowledge of excellence in resilience at ODU.
* Seek out and implement innovative ways of media engagement of resilience stories through traditional and new media forms.
* Coordinate with ODU resilience leadership and the office of research.

*Qualifications:*

* Submissions may be from individuals, non-profit organizations or for-profit entities.
* Required experience for team members:
  + Formal Education: Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in a related field including journalism, communications, English, or marketing.
  + Proven experience in public affairs, public relations, or journalism and in planning, coordinating, and implementing communications strategies.
  + The ability to work collaboratively with an interdisciplinary team
  + A demonstrated knowledge of leveraging digital and social media platforms.
  + Ability to leverage networks to effectively place stories or communications products outside of the Hampton Roads region.
  + A portfolio of prior work in the field of science communication showing the ability to convert scientific research into interesting stories for various audiences.
* Excellent oral and written communication skills and the ability to work independently and collaboratively across an interdisciplinary team meeting tight deadlines. Preferred experience for team members:
  + Experience in communicating natural hazards, climate science, and resilience related research and outreach.
  + Experience in the mid-Atlantic region
  + Demonstrated experience working with academic institutions

**DELIVERABLES:**

* A comprehensive communications strategy and 5-year plan for enhancing the national awareness and reputation of coastal adaptation and resilience research, outreach, and education at Old Dominion University through traditional and new digital media.
* Year 1 implementation of the strategies and plans delineated in the above strategy increasing the understanding and perception of ODU’s work via written media alerts, press releases and media placements, feature stories, video vignettes, and other outreach materials.
* Outreach and marketing materials to inspire, engage, and increase public knowledge of excellence in coastal adaptation and resilience research at ODU.

**SECURITY/CLEARANCE REQUIREMENT:** No security or clearances are required for this work.

**PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:**  The work may be performed remotely, however occasional site visits to the Old Dominion University campus in Norfolk, VA may be required.

**PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** The initial period of performance shall be 1 year with opportunities to renew.

**POINTS OF CONTACT:** Primary contact for this project is Morris Foster, the Vice President for Research, or his designee. For more information on this RFP please contact Emily Steinhilber at [esteinhi@odu.edu](mailto:esteinhi@odu.edu) or (757) 683-5031.

Please send all proposals to Sagan Jackson ([s1jackso@odu.edu](mailto:s1jackso@odu.edu)). Review of proposals will begin on August 9, 2018.