



**Consolidated Response to Questions:
WCC 2017 Marketing, Promotion and Public Relations Consultant RFP**

Introduction:

Question: What is the relationship like between the World Canals Conference and the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc.? In what capacity have the two organizations worked together in the past?

Answer: Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc. (ECHF) is one of the three partner organizations that made a bid to Inland Waterways International (IWI) to host the 2017 World Canals Conference (WCC 2017) in Syracuse. The other partners are New York State Canal Corporation and Visit Syracuse; collectively they are the Hosts. Key staff within the host organizations have attended multiple previous WCCs. The general chair and program chair worked on planning committees for WCC2000 and WCC2010 in Rochester. Those events were hosted by the Canal Society of New York State with funding and staff support from NYS Canal Corporation and Erie Canalway.

Question: How many international delegates are expected?

Answer: Conference Goals: 500 total registrants (including accompanying persons & guests at meals); 300 delegates attending all sessions, meals & events, of which; 100 are International participants; 50 students; and 30 accompanying persons (largely international).

Question: Will there be a student rate for conference attendance?

Answer: Yes. In consultation with the Provider, rates will be established by the Hosts. At similar conferences it is often ½ delegate rate.

Question: Can people pay to attend a single event without registering for the entire conference?

Answer: One-day registrations will be offered and there is likely to be a guest rate for one or two of the evening meals. Hosts will establish rates in consultation with the Provider.

Project Scope:

Question: What percentage of the overall project should each subtask be assigned?

Answer: The primary task of the consultant is to raise awareness and build attendance in the 2017 World Canals Conference and related events. The Hosts see the various tasks and subtasks as tools in the marketing/outreach toolbox. It will be up to the consultant to determine which tools it deems most effective in achieving the primary goal and what percentage of time to devote to each.

General Conditions:

Question: Will the Provider also be responsible for developing pre-conference events, panels and presentations?

Answer: No. Tours, panels & presentations will be developed by the Program Committee (Hosts). Events will be coordinated by Events Committee (Hosts). Implementation and coordination will be the responsibility of a meeting planner & events management consultant, hired under a separate contract.

Scope of Work:

Task 1 – Marketing and Promotional Materials

Question: Can you be more specific about what collateral should be included in our proposal?

Answer: Collateral for the WCC 2017 will be theme-oriented for the conference, utilizing the established conference name, logo, and identity standards. Collateral will include letterhead, pre-conference brochures, post cards electronic direct mail, and “save-the-date” notices, as well as conference brochures, posters, sponsor appreciation materials, and registration materials. It may include, if deemed needed, posters and advertisements. Responses to the WCC 2017 Marketing, Promotion and Public Relations RFP should include examples demonstrating how your firm has successfully developed theme-oriented collateral packages.

Question: Will the Client be providing text for collateral materials?

Answer: Yes, with input and editorial assistance from Provider.

Question: Who will be responsible for seeking bids and overall supervision of printing?

Answer: Printing costs will be paid by the Hosts. The Provider will be responsible for soliciting bids and supervising production.

Question: Who will select the newspapers for advertisements?

Answer: The Hosts will rely on the guidance of the Provider to help determine the best media outlets to place advertisements. The conference committee (Hosts) will make final determination of media outlets with the Provider administering advertisement contracts.

Question: Are newspaper advertisements intended to stimulate conference attendance OR to promote pre-conference events in Syracuse?

Answer: Both, but with primary focus on events. Conference delegates will most likely be secured via direct marketing from existing contact lists and attendance building efforts. Advertisements will primarily target participation in conference-related events.

Question: Will the Client be responsible for newspaper advertisement insertion fees?

Answer: Yes. The Provider will supervise advertisement contracts.

Question: Are the Hosts asking for the provider to create and maintain social media channels for the World Canals Conference 2017 or for the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc.?

Answer: All media developed as part of this contract will be for the purposes of promoting the World Canals Conference 2017.

Question: Many of the past events use video's that highlight the city the event is being held in. It is also in some cases a key component of promoting the conferences to a broader audience. Is there a reason that the development of a video was left out of the sub tasks section?

Answer: The development of a stand-alone promotional video is not in the scope of the current budget. Video linked to previous WCC websites was general purpose material produced by local and regional tourist promotion agencies. Responses submitted for this contract are welcome to submit cost-effective proposals for conference promotion videos as part of proposals.

Question: Can you be more specific regarding "Support an outreach plan for fundraising and sponsorship opportunities?"

Answer: The WCC will be supported through registration and exhibitor fees, public sector grants and through sponsorship (and donor) opportunities. The Hosts, specifically through the nonprofit Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc., will take the lead in securing private sector (and, perhaps, additional public sector) resources through sponsorships and other financial resource mechanisms using donor outreach materials already created for WCC2017. The Provider's support will be needed to ensure that promised benefits of sponsorship are delivered, e.g., sponsors listed on website and conference materials.

Marketing and public relations activities should be consistent with and, as directed by the Hosts, periodically identify our sponsorship and donor opportunities. It is anticipated that such support activities will be relatively consistent throughout the contract period.

Task 2 – Public Relations and Communications

Question: How much travel and onsite presence is expected for the Marketing, Promotion, and Public Relations Consultant as it pertains to press conferences, the conference itself, and any pre- and post-conference events?

Answer: The Provider is expected to organize, manage, and host press conference events and expected to be on-site for press conference events. Marketing and promotion of the conference itself and pre- and post-conference events prior to the events is a priority. Presence at the conference is not required as the Meeting Planner and Event Management Consultant (to be hired separately) will have the primary responsibility of on-site event management.

Task 3 – Database Building and List Management Summary

Question: How large is Client's database of WCC participants since 2000? Does trend data exist for the conferences since 2000?

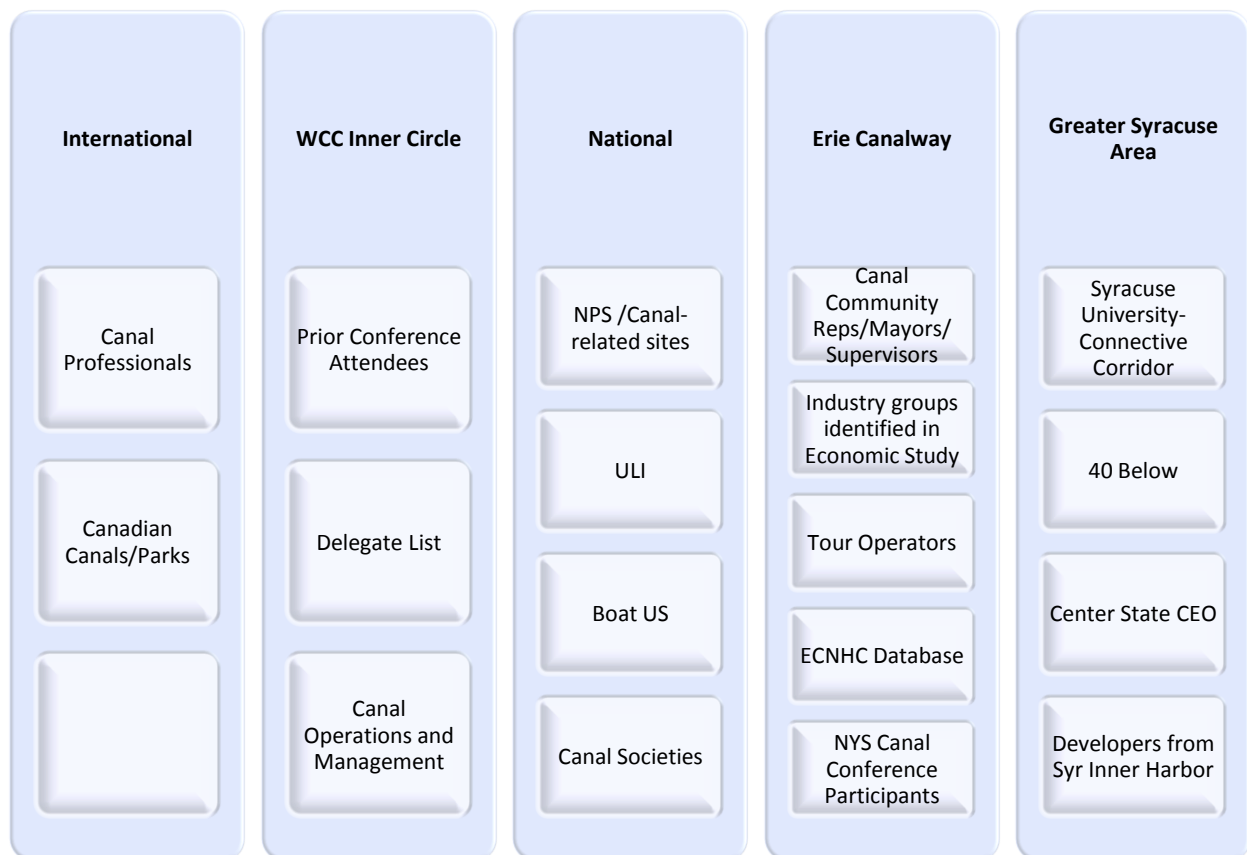
Answer: The Hosts have a database from previous WCC conference listing more than 2,500 participants. The Hosts also have lists with over 3,700 individuals and over 2,900 organizations

and businesses. There may be duplicates. These lists will remain the property of the Hosts. There are other audiences that we have not identified as potential conference participants that the Provider is tasked to identify and to reach out to as part of attendance building tasks. Trend data is currently not available to the Hosts.

Question: Can the Hosts share background information on who the target market is for the World Canals Conferences and data on past attendees?

Answer: The above-mentioned databases will be provided to the selected Provider for attendance building. The target market for both conference delegates and conference-related events includes canal professionals, historians, canal enthusiasts, public officials, community leaders, educators, businesses, sponsors, exhibitors, students, professional and community groups, and local and regional members of public for canal-related community events before, during, and after the conference.

Target Audience Matrix



Question: Will the database be developed using lists supplied by the Client?

Answer: The Hosts will supply above-referenced databases as a foundation for attendance building, a primary goal of this contract. The Provider is expected to expand these lists through applied attendance building methods.

Question: What form is the current list in?

Answer: Excel (.xlsx) and Access (.mdb)

Question: How sophisticated of a database is expected?

Answer: The existing databases are basic. The main function of the database is to support attendance building activities, especially via electronic communication. Sophistication will need to be sufficient to effectively facilitate attendance building goals.

Question: Is an Excel format for the database acceptable?

Answer: The final product, to be the property of the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc., will need to be in a non-proprietary database format (e.g., .mdb). Database structure example will be provided upon awarding of contract. Recommendations will be sought from the Provider as to how best to develop database for the purpose of attendance building for the conference and conference-related events.

Question: Is the Provider expected to create and manage the list or will it be handed off to Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc.

Answer: The provider is expected to utilize the current spreadsheet and database identified above as the foundation for an attendance building database; expand and develop the database to include previously unidentified and untapped potential conference participants; manage and utilize the database as part of attendance building, marketing, and promoting the conference; and finally return the developed database back to the Erie Canalway Heritage Fund, Inc. at the conclusion of the conference.

Task 4 – Attendance Building

Question: The targeted delegate registration mentioned on the RFP is 500. How was this number established? Is it based on past attendee statistics?

Answer: Target delegate registration is based upon both registration rates of recent conferences; local, regional, national and international interest in the Erie Canal, and planned community involvement in celebrating the Bicentennial of the Erie Canal.

Task 5 – Website Development

Question: What is the conference URL?

Answer: wcc2017syracuse.com

Question: Should the site be similar in functionality to the 2016 WCC Scotland site? Are there any other features / functionality that you're looking incorporate into the new site?

Answer: Yes. WCC Scotland site uses a simple, easy to navigate format that can serve as a template for WCC2017. We would also like to include background information on the Erie Canal – general history and things to see and do here today as enticements to come. Much of this information already exists and can simply be modified to serve as content for the website.

Question: Is there anything on the current site that you see as a problem or issue, or has led to problems or issues for attendees or prospective attendees?

Answer: Google translate has been reported to have minor issues, especially with technical language/ jargon. Multi-screen, multi-step registration process may be overly complicated; a more straight-forward registration page is requested.

Question: Will the website need to be available in multiple languages?

Answer: Yes. At a minimum: English, French, German, and Italian.

Question: Do you want to include a similar ticketing system: Attendees can register and pay online via PayPal or can submit an online registration form, receive an invoice, and then are given a timeframe in which to pay?

Answer: Yes. The use of PayPal is anticipated. The option for a direct credit card payment and an invoice option are both needed as part of the website design. This will help meet the needs of many of the corporate and government registrants.

Question: The RFP mentions that registration will be administered by another contractor. Is the role of this contractor to manage the data that is submitted via the website or will they be providing us with the registration portal to embed into the site?

Answer: The Meeting Planner and Event Management Consultant will be managing registration information submitted via the website. The Marketing, Promotion and Public Relations Consultant (Provider) will be responsible for developing the registration portal. It is anticipated the Provider will need to coordinate with the Hosts and the Meeting Planner and Event Management Consultant to ensure that all registration needs are met by the registration page of the conference website.

Question: If we are responsible for building out the registration portal, what form of payments will be accepted?

Answer: PayPal, credit card, and invoicing options.

Question: Will the vendor that is developing the site be hosting it as well?

Answer: We will need the vendor to engage a site host if they are not able to host the site directly.

Estimated Schedule of Key Events and Key Dates:

Question: Who is attending WCC 2016 in Scotland?

Answer: Between three and four representatives from the Host organizations will attend WCC 2016 in Scotland.

Question: Is Provider expected to also attend WCC 2016 in Scotland?

Answer: No.

Question: Is Provider expected to design a newsletter?

Answer: An electronic newsletter would be a useful tool for reaching large numbers of potential attendees and disseminating information about WCC2017. A platform such as Constant Contact (or similar) would be preferred as pre-existing templates can be used and customized to serve our

needs. Recipients would include contacts in the database of potential attendees, including individuals who have attended past conferences and representatives of organizations who can distribute WCC information to their own lists.

Question: Is the newsletter electronic?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Who will receive the monthly newsletter?

Answer: Previous WCC registrants, government officials, public officials, historians, canal organizations, and interested members of the public.

Administrative Specifications:

Question: Are there previous years where similar contracts were granted?

Answer: This is the first time the Hosts have taken a lead role in organizing the World Canals Conference, so the Hosts do not have information on prior contracts.

Question: What is the budget for this contract?

Answer: A minimum of \$75,000 will be available for this contract.

Question: What is the main source of income for the Conference?

Answer: Income for the conference is estimated to be approximately equal from grants, conference sponsorship, and registration fees.

Question: What is the cost per acquisition?

Answer: This has not been determined.