



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Strategic Communications Planning for the New York State Integrated Pest Management Program

Issue Date

April 3, 2019

Proposal Due Date

Noon, April 26, 2019

Anticipated Contract Period

May 1, 2019 – June 28, 2019

Issued by

The New York State Integrated Pest Management Program
Cornell University

<https://nysipm.cornell.edu/>

Cornell University is an Equal Opportunity Employer and provider of employment and training programs.

RFP Contact

Janet Garlick

jl2@cornell.edu

I. RFP OVERVIEW

The New York State Integrated Pest Management Program (NYSIPM) seeks to acquire the services of a qualified communications firm to:

- 1) Analyze NYSIPM's current and recent communications efforts for success in promoting the program's mission to target audiences
- 2) Develop strategic communications goals for NYSIPM for the next five years
- 3) Provide building blocks for NYSIPM to create our own five year communications plan

II. BACKGROUND

NYSIPM mission, history and organization

The mission of NYSIPM is to develop sustainable ways to manage pests and help people to use methods that minimize environmental, health, and economic risks.

NYSIPM seeks to:

- raise awareness in the general public and with farmers and other pest management professionals that IPM is the best solution for pest problems while protecting the environment and human health
- change behavior of farmers and other pest management professionals to using IPM
- change behavior of the general public to use IPM and preferentially choose IPM-grown food and IPM services

NY is the fourth most populated state in the U.S., with 19.9 million people. It ranks in the top 10 states for 30 products in dairy, ornamental plants, fruits, vegetables, field crops and livestock. There are 36,000 farms on 7.2 million acres in New York State. We serve these major agricultural sectors, and also work in community settings such as schools, homes, municipal properties and buildings, parks and golf courses.

The NYSIPM Program was formally created 34 years ago and has a rich history of collaboration, delivering science-based Integrated Pest Management (IPM) training and resources, and measuring impacts. NYSIPM participated in the development of the National IPM Roadmap and subscribes to its goals, including: improving cost/benefit analyses through the adoption of IPM practices, reducing potential human health risks from pests and related pest management practices, and minimizing adverse environmental effects from pests and pest management practices. NY residents benefit from IPM's protection of land, water and air, as well as direct reduction of risk where they live, learn, work and play. See recent accomplishments in our Annual Reports (<https://nysipm.cornell.edu/resources/publications/nys-ipm-annual-reports/>) and on our website, www.nysipm.cornell.edu/. The program is primarily funded by New York State, via the Department of Agriculture and Markets and the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The NYSIPM staff is comprised of a director, 15 IPM specialists, two administrators, a webmaster/graphic artist, and two technicians. A half-time writer position was recently vacated due to retirement.

NYSIPM Communications

IPM specialists have knowledge of IPM techniques and practices, and how to integrate them

into production and management systems. They share this information via various online and hard copy media, presentations, workshops and one-on-one training. These communications are often aided by Karen English, the NYSIPM graphic artist and webmaster. Our writer sometimes helped with written materials from specialists, but mostly she independently wrote materials based on the specialists' work—such as our annual report and press releases about award winners and occasionally about IPM events, products and achievements.

Featured NYSIPM communications resources for raising awareness in the general public and with end-users include:

- NYSIPM website: nysipm.cornell.edu/
- Think IPM Blog: blogs.cornell.edu/nysipm
- NYSIPM Annual reports: nysipm.cornell.edu/about/our-annual-report/
- What's bugging you?: nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/

**Additional resources are listed in Appendix A.*

Featured NYSIPM communications resources for teaching how to use IPM include the above resources as well as:

- Commodity and pest specific blogs
- Commodity and pest specific web pages
- Network for Environment and Weather Applications (NEWA), a comprehensive website of pest forecasts and weather monitoring:
<https://blogs.cornell.edu/yourenewa/>
- Fact Sheets—over 250 available
- Community and Agricultural IPM brochures
- Infographics/Posters
- Identification cards (bed bugs, ticks, spotted lanternfly)
- Education kits (ticks)
- *Elements of IPM* for a variety of crops:
<https://nysipm.cornell.edu/resources/publications/ipm-elements/>
- Books and other print/electronic resources

**Additional resources are listed in Appendix A.*

The resources listed are provided as an example of current communications tactics and approach employed by NYSIPM. The firm awarded this contract is not expected to analyze individual resources.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

Description of Requested Services

NYSIPM seeks to retain a communications firm to:

- 1) Analyze our current and recent communications efforts** for success in promoting our mission to the general public, Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALS), NYS legislators, and end-users. This analysis will allow us to gain understanding of our current organizational structure and staffing as it relates to communications, and to inform the strategic communications plan.

For this analysis, the following people should be interviewed by phone or videoconference:

- NYSIPM Director
- NYSIPM Commodity Coordinators (as a group)
- 5 people from the general public, selected by the communications firm.
- 8 farmers/growers, selected by NYSIPM
- 6 Community IPM practitioners, selected by NYSIPM
- 3 CALS administrators, selected by NYSIPM
- 3 legislative aides, selected by NYSIPM

2) Develop strategic communications goals for NYSIPM for the next five years.

As described in the background section, NYSIPM seeks to raise awareness and change behavior. We want measurable communications goals that will further these programmatic goals, and provide a framework for a communications plan.

3) Provide building blocks for NYSIPM to create our own five year communications plan, including:

- a. A Situational Analysis
Assess NYSIPM's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats—both internally and externally.
- b. Audience analysis
We currently consider our audience to be the general public, colleagues and administrators in Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Science (CALS), funders such as New York State legislators, and potential end-users of IPM practices such as farmers, professional pest managers, and homeowners. We seek guidance on the tactics and amount of time to be spent on raising awareness in these audiences and training end-users how to practice IPM; and how these responsibilities should be distributed among NYSIPM communications and program staff.
- c. Messaging strategy guidance
How should we most effectively be packaging our message to broad audiences to raise awareness and to specific end-user audiences to encourage and teach them how to practice IPM?
- d. Specifications for a communications specialist to be hired by NYSIPM in 2019, describing:
 - i. Skills and experience that would maximize NYSIPM communications success
 - ii. Responsibilities this position should encompass

IV. DELIVERABLES

As described in the Scope of Work, the firm selected will deliver three products:

A. Analysis of the impact of current and recent communications efforts

The selected communications firm will deliver an analysis of the impact and success of past communications efforts (Deliverable A), which in turn will inform the strategic goals (Deliverable B), and communications plan building blocks (Deliverable C).

B. Strategic communications goals for NYSIPM

C. Communications plan building blocks

V. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Respondents are ineligible if they:

- 1) are currently barred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by a Federal, State or Local department/agency; or
- 2) have existing grants with any State or Local agency that are suspended or otherwise not in good standing.

B. Project Duration

The contractor will be expected to complete all project activities and produce all deliverables during a period commencing on or about May 1, 2019 through June 28, 2019.

C. Project Cost

Respondents are advised to submit proposals reflecting their best and most competitive cost.

The contractor is expected to have an initial in-person, half day meeting with NYSIPM personnel in Geneva, NY to launch the project; and a final in-person meeting in Geneva to present findings and deliverables. All other meetings and interviews can be conducted by phone or videoconference.

The initial contract may be modified in writing by mutual agreement of the two parties to include additional activities reasonably related to the project, with additional funding to support the completion of those activities pending availability of funds and performance of the contractor. Payment will be contingent on the provision of services and NYSIPM's acceptance of deliverables.

D. Evaluation and Selection

1. Evaluation

The evaluation of proposals will be accomplished by the NYSIPM Director, in consultation with colleagues of her choice, who will determine the proposal most advantageous to NYSIPM based on the written proposal and references. Respondents should also be available for a brief phone interview if requested.

2. Administrative Screening

All proposals will be reviewed to determine compliance with requirements as specified in the RFP. Proposals found not to be in compliance will be rejected from further consideration.

3. Proposal Review

The purpose of the RFP process is to secure the Respondent most capable of providing the services specified in this document. Selection will be made solely on the basis of the most responsive proposal submitted by a qualified Respondent that satisfies all services and/or products described in this RFP.

The criteria for the evaluation process will be based on the following:

- **Corporate Qualifications and Management Support**

This refers to the capability of the organization to perform the work requested in the RFP. This includes whether the organization has sufficient resources to work within the time constraints while maintaining desired performance levels and the level of competence of their professional personnel who will be assigned to the job by the proposer. Qualifications of professional personnel will be judged on the basis of experience and education with particular reference to prior experience on projects of a similar nature.

- **Experience**

This refers to the Respondent's previous successful experience with similar University, Extension, or nonprofit strategic communications projects.

- **Compliance with the Technical Requirements of the RFP/Approach and Methodology**

A proposal consisting of repetition of the RFP only will not be a satisfactory indicator of the proposer's grasp of the complexity of the project. Each proposal will be evaluated on:

- (1) the proposer's demonstrated understanding of the depth, complexity

and scope of the challenges of communicating IPM

(2) the proposer's approach and solutions to solving those challenges with an emphasis on the specific techniques proposed for delivering our messages to our target audiences.

4. Announcement of Contractor

NYSIPM will notify the successful proposer and proceed to negotiate terms for final contract with Cornell University. The contract award will not be final until NYSIPM, Cornell University, and the Respondent have executed a mutually satisfactory contractual agreement.

Unsuccessful Respondents will be notified by email accordingly.

VI. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

The proposal should be organized into the following sections and sequence:

Section A – Describe the consultant’s approach to the project, including an overview of the proposed plan for completing activities identified in this Request for Proposal (RFP).

Section B – Provide a detailed work plan for completing project activities and producing project deliverables with specific action steps and a timetable for completion.

Section C – Discuss the proposed organization’s structure for the project, the number and qualifications of the person/personnel that the Respondent proposes to make available to complete the work, the manner in which they will be utilized, and how they will operate within the proposed organization structure. Specify the amount of time each of the key personnel will commit to the project; provide resumes of key project staff, detailing their technical skills, experience, education, etc. Identify all pertinent experience of personnel. Please provide the primary point of contact responsible for responding to client questions, concerns and directives.

Section D – Provide: information on the organization’s background and related experience; a brief history of the company; and a listing of representative customers—including three references. Describe the general range of products and services offered.

Section E – Provide a detailed budget that supports the total project cost. The budget should contain cost information and a proposed payment schedule by deliverable. The contract to be awarded will be for a fixed price but payments can be based on the completion of individual activities with NYSIPM’s acceptance of project deliverables.

VII. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

All final proposals must be received by noon on April 26, 2019.

- **Cover Sheet** – Prepare a cover sheet (Attachment A), that identifies the organization, provides contact information, date of submission, and project name.
- **Table of Contents**
- **Proposal Narrative (includes sections A-E)**

Please send any questions, and electronic copies of proposals to:
Janet Garlick, jlg2@cornell.edu

Appendix A

NYSIPM communications resources for raising awareness in the general public and with end-users include:

- NYSIPM website: nysipm.cornell.edu/
- Think IPM Blog: blogs.cornell.edu/nysipm
- NYSIPM Annual reports: nysipm.cornell.edu/about/our-annual-report/
- What's bugging you?: nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/
- NYSIPM Twitter feed: @NYSIPM
- NYSIPM FaceBook: www.facebook.com/NYSIPM/
- NYSIPM Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/99758165@N06/>
- *Get the Bugs Out* brochure
- Staff presentations at numerous conferences, Cornell classes and other venues
- Articles written by NYSIPM staff for various trade journals, CCE newsletters, and other publications
- NYSIPM videos: www.youtube.com/user/NYSIPM
- Annual Statewide IPM Conference
- NYSIPM Flickr: flickr.com/photos/99758165@N06/
- Publications and Project Reports Collections at eCommons: ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/40850
- The *Don't get Ticked* NY campaign, www.DontGetTickedNY.org

NYSIPM communications resources for teaching how to use IPM include the above resources as well as:

- Commodity and pest specific blogs:
 - Ornamental Tree IPM: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/treeipm/>
 - Ornamentals Crops: <https://blogs.cornell.edu/ornamentalcropsipm/>
 - The ABCs of School and Childcare Pest Management: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/schoolchildcareipm/>
 - Biocontrol Bytes: <https://blogs.cornell.edu/biocontrolbytes/>
 - Field Crops Pest Report: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/ipmwpr>
 - Spotted Wing Drosophila: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/swd1/>
 - Sweet Corn Pheromone Trap Network: <http://sweetcorn.nysipm.cornell.edu/>
- Commodity and pest specific web pages:
 - Fruits: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/agriculture/fruits/>
 - Vegetables: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/agriculture/vegetables/>
 - Livestock and Field Crops: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/agriculture/livestock-and-field-crops/>
 - Ornamental Crops: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/agriculture/ornamental-crops/>
 - Community
 - Landscapes, Parks, and Golf Courses: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/community/landscapes-parks-and-golf-courses/>
 - Schools and Daycare Centers: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/community/schools-and-daycare-centers/>

- Homes and Other Buildings:
 - <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/community/homes-and-other-buildings/>
 - Spotted Lanternfly: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/invasive-species-exotic-pests/spotted-lanternfly/>
 - Ticks: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/whats-bugging-you/ticks/>
 - Invasive species: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/invasive-species-exotic-pests/>
 - Pollinators: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/pollinators/>
 - Organic IPM: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/organic-ipm/>
 - Biocontrol: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/biocontrol/>
- Network for Environment and Weather Applications (NEWA), a comprehensive website of pest forecasts and weather monitoring: <https://blogs.cornell.edu/yourenewa/>
- Fact Sheets—over 250 available
- Community IPM brochures
 - Evict and Exile Mice from your Home
 - Found a Cockroach? (Saw a GAZILLION?)
 - Grubs in Your Lawn? a guide for lawn care professionals and homeowners
 - IPM for Homes: How To Use Integrated Pest Management To Uninvite Residential Pests
 - Weeds and Your Garden
 - Weeds and Your Lawn
 - What is IPM? Basics for Teachers
 - What's all the buzz about mosquitoes?
 - ¿Qué pasa con el mosquito?
- Agricultural IPM brochures
 - Disease Resistant Vegetables
 - Is the Tactical Agriculture (TAg) Program for You?
 - Late Blight, A Serious Disease of Potatoes and Tomatoes
 - NEWA: Network for Environment and Weather Applications
 - Spotted Wing Drosophila
 - Weed Suppressive Ground Covers Brochure
- Infographics/Posters
 - Bed bugs: <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/40850/discover?query=%22NYS+IPM+Type%3A+Bed+Bugs+Illustrated+English%22&submit=>
 - Ticks: <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/41246/discover?query=%22NYS+IPM+Type%3A+Tick+Infographic+Poster%22>
- Identification cards (bed bugs, ticks, spotted lanternfly)
- Education kits (ticks)
- Elements of IPM for a variety of crops: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/resources/publications/ipm-elements/>
- Books and other large resources
 - Landscape and Forest Pests Handbook: <https://nysipm.cornell.edu/agriculture/ornamental-crops/landscape->

[and-forest-pests/](#)

- Organic IPM production guides:
<https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/organic-ipm/>
- Active Ingredients Eligible for Minimum Risk Pesticide Use:
<https://nysipm.cornell.edu/environment/active-ingredients-eligible-minimum-risk-pesticide-use/>

How to get bed bugs out of your belongings:

<https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/55760>

Attachment A

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Name of organization:

Contact Name:

Contact Title:

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Legal Status:

Private for Profit Corp. (Date Incorporated/State) _____

Private Not-for-Profit Corp. (Date Incorporated/State) _____

Sole Proprietorship

Partnership

Other (Specify): _____

Title of Project:

Date of Submission:

Total Project Cost/Budget:

The Respondent certifies that the information provided in this Request for Proposal includes all attachments, is true, accurate and current, and the representative signing below is authorized to do so on behalf of the above named organization.

Signature of Authorized Representative* (required)

X _____ Date: _____

**Person who legally signs contract for an organization*