



**Smart Start of Mecklenburg County  
Request for Proposal  
February 5, 2024**

Smart Start of Mecklenburg County (SSMC) invites you to submit a proposal for a SSMC Brand Study, in accordance with the terms, conditions, and requirements outlined below and listed on **Attachment I – Scope of Work**. The proposal is for FY23-24. SSMC's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.

SSMC is a nonprofit, state-funded initiative operating in Mecklenburg County, whose mission is to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. Our website is [www.smartstartofmeck.org](http://www.smartstartofmeck.org).

This request for proposal shall not be construed as an obligation by SSMC to enter into an agreement or purchase order with your company. We are only requesting information as a prospect of doing future business with your company.

Your proposal must be received in our office no later than **4:00 p.m. on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

Please submit your proposal, via electronic PDF to:

Emily Lancucki  
Chief Advancement Officer  
Smart Start of Mecklenburg County  
[elancucki@smartstartofmeck.org](mailto:elancucki@smartstartofmeck.org)

Proposals must include a cover letter and completed responses to **Attachment II – RFP Response Form**. Your proposal should include all cost estimates, including travel, associated with the requested scope of work. You may include additional relevant information regarding your company if you choose. Late and/or incomplete proposals will not be accepted. Proposals will be evaluated based on a combination of answers within Attachment II.

Thank you for your interest in assisting SSMC with the procurement of program monitoring activities so that we may continue to perform the duties of our mission to the children and families of Mecklenburg County.

If you have any questions, please email Emily Lancucki, [elancucki@smartstartofmeck.org](mailto:elancucki@smartstartofmeck.org)

**Smart Start of Mecklenburg County**

601 E. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500, Charlotte, NC 28202 | [info@smartstartofmeck.org](mailto:info@smartstartofmeck.org) | (704) 377-6588

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## Attachment I – Scope of Work

SSMC is seeking marketing, brand awareness, and communications support in the categories below. While projects may be focused on different audiences, SSMC would like to utilize one vendor for all resources. Any costs for printing or advertising would be in addition to retainer cost.

### Description

#### Phase One: Discovery

- Internal Viewpoint: Assess SSMC's internal perception and strategy.
- Input Session with SSMC Leadership: Engage leaders in discussions about SSMC's goals and challenges.
- Interviews with Key Stakeholders: Include SSMC staff, partners, and community representatives.
- Secondary Research: Investigate trends and data in early childhood education.
- Consumer Viewpoint: Understand community needs and perceptions.
- Survey Methods and Privacy: Ensure ethical data collection.

#### Phase Two: Messaging & Content Analysis

- Testing: Evaluate the brand's effectiveness.
- Comprehensive Branding and Research Report: Document findings and strategies.  
Content Alignment: Align all media and marketing materials.
- Brand Asset Library: Update our repository of brand materials.
- Strategic Marketing Plan: Develop a plan based on research findings.

#### Phase Three: Brand Integration and Design

- Enrollment Marketing: Tailor marketing to engage and enroll families and children in SSMC programs.
- Events and Community Center Marketing: Partnering with community centers and similar venues to conduct targeted marketing efforts, enhancing local engagement and outreach for SSMC's services and initiatives.
- Advertising & Partnerships: Develop partnerships and advertising strategies.
- Other: Include additional relevant marketing initiatives.

#### Cost & Time Estimate

- SSMC looks forward to a total proposal, broken down by month
- Project will be for four months, from February 2024 – June 2024
- All funds and project deliverables must be completed by June 2024.

#### **Required Skills and Experience**

- Must be located and/or have a significant presence within Mecklenburg County.
- Proven record of accomplishment with quality marketing and communication work.
- Previous experience working with early childhood initiatives and nonprofit organizations is preferred.
- Knowledge of Charlotte-area nonprofit environment is preferred.
- Previous experience working with SSMC is preferred.

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## Attachment II – RFP Response Form

*Applicants must complete all sections of this form to be considered.  
All responses must consist of no more than 250 words each.*

Company Name:  
Contact Email:

Primary Contact:  
Contact Phone:

Do you have experience working within the early childhood (0-5) environment? If so, please list no more than 3 examples.

Do you have experience in marketing and communication with nonprofit organizations? If so, please let no more than 3 examples.

Are you located and/or have a significant presence in Mecklenburg County and knowledge of the community?

How would your organization staff this project? Would there be a single individual or team approach?

Briefly summarize how you would approach your work in addressing this process.

Provide your best cost estimate based on the Scope of Work (ranges may be used; actual numbers are required). If you have estimates for printing or digital ads you may include those, but not required.

Please provide 2-3 references of comparable clients you have worked with that SSMC may reach out to if your company is chosen to move forward.

Please provide a link to your website and social media accounts.

Are you a minority-owned, woman-owned, or small business?

In the space below, please provide any additional relevant information that you would like to be considered in our decision.

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