

Request for Proposals for Marketing and Communications for Robotics in Massachusetts (RFP No.2025-JAII-01)

Updated July 31, 2024

GOALS AND METRICS

1. Are there specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to measure the success of this campaign?

The metrics MassTech will be tracking are 1) number of social media followers and 2) visits to the robotics website. The definition of success will be a topic of early conversation with the chosen contractor.

2. Can you share your overarching goals for the campaign?

- a. Could you elaborate on the primary goals and success metrics for this marketing campaign?

Our campaign aims to address several major goals within the Massachusetts robotics ecosystem. While the ecosystem is robust due to the exceptional talent and potential present in the state, there is a need to strengthen collaboration across the ecosystem and present more cohesively. Additionally, there is a lack of awareness outside of Massachusetts about our strengths in robotics.

To tackle these issues, our campaign has the following overarching goals:

- **Present a Unified Brand for Robotics in Massachusetts:** We want to create a cohesive and recognizable brand that highlights the strengths and opportunities within the Massachusetts robotics sector. This will help attract talent and businesses from out-of-state and better publicize our capabilities.
- **Encourage Entrepreneurs to Build Businesses Here:** Whether they are already in-state or from out-of-state, we aim to motivate entrepreneurs to establish and grow their robotics ventures in Massachusetts. Our goal is to make Massachusetts the go-to destination for robotics startups.
- **Attract Investment in Local Businesses:** We aim to draw the attention of investors, particularly those interested in hardware technology, to the thriving robotics startups in Massachusetts. By showcasing the potential for high returns on investment, we hope to stimulate economic growth and innovation.
- **Foster Collaboration Across the Ecosystem:** We intend to enhance collaboration among various stakeholders, including academia, industry, and non-profits. By facilitating connections and partnerships, we believe we can unlock new opportunities and drive the industry forward.

This campaign is designed to strengthen the overall ecosystem, both by bringing in new talent and resources and by better connecting the existing players within the state.

3. **Who is the primary target audience for this campaign (e.g., potential investors, robotics companies, academia, general public)?**
 - a. **What are the key audiences the marketing campaign aims to reach, both within and beyond Massachusetts? How should the firm tailor its approach to effectively engage each target audience and communicate the unique opportunities the robotics cluster offers to new and existing entities?**
 - b. **In Section 2.1, the RFP states, "This campaign seeks to articulate a cohesive narrative that celebrates the Massachusetts robotics cluster, resonating with audiences both within and beyond state lines." Could you clarify if there are different target audiences within Massachusetts and outside of Massachusetts?**

The robotics ecosystem in Massachusetts is extensive and includes many stakeholders such as industry professionals, academics, investment firms, and the public who use robotic technologies. Additionally, we have goals that target both in-state and out-of-state audiences. Our aim is to work closely with a contractor to refine our strategy and effectively target the most impactful audiences.

Currently, we are focusing on three primary groups:

Entrepreneurs: Both in-state and out-of-state entrepreneurs who are interested in building and/or scaling their robotics businesses in Massachusetts.

Investors: Specifically, those investing in hardware technology, to encourage investment in local robotics startups.

Early-Stage Professionals: Individuals at the beginning of their careers who are seeking opportunities in the robotics field.

4. **Will the video content produced for this campaign also be used in workforce development contexts, such as integration into curricula or recruitment fairs?**

No, video content is just for posting on our website and other social media platforms.

5. **How would you prioritize the deliverables in phase 1 and 2 based on importance?**

We hope to work with the chosen contractor to prioritize the asks based on cost and strategic value to the campaign. We welcome applicants to set priorities in the budget and justify their strategy.

EXAMPLES AND PAST EXPERIENCE

6. **Could you provide examples of past MassTech marketing campaigns that were successful or unsuccessful, and explain why?**
- Have you worked with any other marketing firms for similar projects in the past? If so, could you share who they are?**
 - Are there specific lessons learned from previous projects that we should be aware of?**
 - Has MassTech specifically produced any videos for similar initiatives in the past? If so, could you share examples?**

Please review the [MassMakes](#) campaign as an example of a successful marketing campaign undertaken by MassTech.

Additionally, the Robotics Department contracted with a videography firm to produce [this video](#) on the robotics page on the MassTech site.

7. **In Section 2.1, the RFP states, "Similar campaigns exist both in other ecosystems within Massachusetts and in other robotics ecosystems across the country." Could you provide links (YouTube, Vimeo, Social Media Handles, etc.) to these campaigns to illustrate your desired video deliverables?**

Choose Atlanta campaign website

<https://www.chooseatl.com/>

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/atlantawhereyoubelong/>

<https://www.instagram.com/atlantawhereyoubelong/>

You Can In Michigan campaign website

<https://themichiganlife.org/> (video is on home page)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/youcanin-michigan/>

<https://www.instagram.com/youcaninmichigan/>

[Facebook Ad List](#)

Pittsburgh Row website

<https://pittsburghregion.org/> (video roll is on home page)

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/pittsburgh-regional-alliance/>

<https://www.instagram.com/pghregion/>

8. **Is there an incumbent? If yes, how long has the incumbent been in place?**
- Have you ever worked with an agency in the past and is there an incumbent agency participating in the search? If not, can you share why?**
 - Could MassTech provide the incumbent's response and cost proposal?**

There is no incumbent agency for MassTech.

9. **Is it mandatory for vendors to be Minority and Women-Owned Businesses to bid on this opportunity? If, yes what is the goal?**

It is not mandatory for vendors to be Minority and Women-Owned Businesses to bid on this opportunity. However, as outlined in the federal provisions included in the RFP, if vendors choose to subcontract or use external services, they take affirmative steps to utilize women and minority-owned businesses if possible. This practice supports diversity and inclusion within our project framework and aligns with federal guidelines.

10. Please clarify if the vendors have to submit Attachment C - Budget Template as a separate Excel file or within the technical response in PDF.

Please submit Attachment C as a separate file.

11. It is our understanding that the vendors just have to provide a statement to “Exceptions to the Services Agreement and Statement of Work”, is it correct?

If the vendor has exceptions to the Services Agreement and Statement of Work, please provide either a list of changes sought or a redline of the document. If there are no changes, no action is needed.

BUDGET

12. Could you provide more detail on the budget allocation for Phase 1 and Phase 2? Are there certain areas within the scope of work where you would like more resources to be invested?

- a. Can you clarify the budget guidelines and expectations? The RFP states budgets should not exceed \$250,000 for the entire project, but does this include both Phase 1 and Phase 2 costs? Is there flexibility in the budget if the selected firm proposes innovative ideas that may exceed the \$250,000 cap but could significantly enhance the campaign's impact?
- b. Is there an allocated budget for this RFP?
- c. Is there additional production budget outside of the \$250,000 allocated for the development of the campaign or does that \$250,000 include all creative development and production? If media is included (re: above question), is there also a separate media spend budget?
- d. You specify video in both phases of the project: Are production costs for those videos anticipated to fall within the \$250k budget indicated, or is there a separate production budget?
- e. In Phase 2 you ask for creation and distribution of digital advertising: Is there a separate budget for media planning/buying/placement?
- f. Are we correct to assume the outside media buy is not included in the \$250,000 budget?
- g. For the trade show materials, is the printing/production included in the overall \$250,000 budget, for banners, flyers, booth graphics, etc.?

The allocated \$250,000 budget is for the entirety of the project. It encompasses Phase 1 and Phase 2, including the creative design process, video production, and digital advertising. The tradeshow materials will be purchased from a separate budget and will be ordered by MassTech following design approval. The MassTech team understands that the allocated budget may not allow for all the asks in the RFP, but we hope to strategize with the selected agency about how to spend the budget most effectively. We welcome strategic ideas and budget justification in the application.

SUBMISSION/SELECTION PROCESS

13. What qualities or capabilities are you looking for in a partner that will differentiate the selected firm from others?

MassTech is seeking a partner with a proven track record of delivering marketing and branding materials as well as promotional video, as presented in a portfolio. MassTech also seeks a partner who can work within a given budget and can assist in strategizing about how to use the budget most effectively to meet our goals.

14. Section 3 of the RFP outlines the general evaluation criteria for proposals but does not specify the weighting of each section. Could you provide details on how each section will be scored, or how the points are distributed?

At this time, we are not providing a specific rubric or detailed point distribution for the evaluation criteria. Our goal is to remain flexible and open to the wide range of creative solutions that we anticipate receiving. We understand that each proposal will bring unique strengths and innovative approaches, and we want to ensure that we can evaluate them holistically.

15. Section 5.1(G) of the RFP states, "The selected Respondent will take all appropriate steps to assure that minority firms, women's business enterprises, and labor surplus area firms are used when possible." Is preference given to SDO certified MBE, WBE, etc. applicants and/or subcontractors?

- a. Are SBPP businesses included in the list of favorable SDO certifications?
- b. If a scoring point system is in place, are points awarded for subcontracting with SDO certified businesses, and if so, how is that weighted?

The language in the RFP is a required federal flow down that will be included in the contract with the selected vendor. See <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-D/subject-group-ECFR45ddd4419ad436d/section-200.321> for more information. It does not state a preference for applicants and/or subcontractors. SBPP businesses are not included in federal requirements.

16. What specific format is required for submission?

The budget file must be submitted using the provided Excel spreadsheet. The writing portion should be a .doc or .pdf file, but applicants are welcome to submit images, presentations, and other files to supplement their submission.

17. Can you elaborate on the depth of the ask for “initial ideas or concepts for the campaign’s thematic direction” within the submission instructions? Is the expectation that spec work for the campaign will be included in our submission?

For this submission, MassTech asks for a written paragraph outlining a general strategy or direction for this campaign.

18. Can a ‘Firm’ be considered several sole proprietorships partnered together or does it need to be a single entity?

A Firm does need to be a single entity who signs the initial contract. The chosen contractor is free to subcontract the work if necessary.

EXECUTION

General Media

19. In Section 2.1, the RFP states, "...a comprehensive media campaign aimed at highlighting the unique strengths and opportunities available for robotics endeavors in the Commonwealth." Could you outline the overall media planning you intend to target? Besides social media and the website, are you envisioning broadcast, CTV, billboards, print, and other placements?

- a. In Section 2.1, the RFP states, "...a comprehensive media campaign," but there are no mentions of media planning or media buying in either Phase 1 or Phase 2. Will the awarded vendor also be responsible for media planning and media buying? If so, should we factor that into our budget, and is there a budget threshold in mind for media buys?
- b. In Phase 2: Brand/Campaign maintenance, you note “creation and *distribution* of digital advertising” and “social media and advertising analytics” – Is media planning, buying and analytics included in the scope of services?
- c. In Section 2.2, Phase 2, the RFP states the "Creation and distribution of digital advertising" -- does this include paid advertising on social platforms such as Instagram?
- d. For the deliverable “creation and distribution of digital advertising” who is developing the media plan? Are there specific advertising units already purchased? Or is the deliverable to develop a digital media plan, create the ad units, and traffic/place them to media outlets?
- e. Is the digital marketing deliverable for phase 2 limited to ‘owned’ and/or ‘earned’ channels or does a paid media strategy need to be developed and pulled from the 250k budget?

The current plan is only to create and distribute digital ads on various social media platforms, and create tradeshow materials such as banners, flyers, brochures, etc. The contractor will be responsible for the development and distribution of digital ads and the applicant should propose a reasonable budget for media buys based on the entire scope of work.

20. On which social media platforms do you intend to share/post content primarily? On which platforms have you seen the best engagement in the past?

This will be part of early strategic conversations with the contractor, and MassTech is open to feedback.

21. Are the trade shows assets needed mainly marketing collateral (as per the line item in the RFP) or will the development of large scale graphics, hanging signs, etc. also be required? Does creation of tradeshow assets mean providing a packaged print-ready design file or physical assets ready for event activations?

The tradeshow assets are mainly the mentioned marketing collateral. The largest asset we envision is a standing backdrop banner, approximately 10'x7'. The chosen contractor will deliver the design files and MassTech will order the materials through approved vendors.

22. Can you clarify the needs of a style guide such as what it should contain (visual/verbal brand guidelines) and who the intended users would be - other agencies, partners, etc.?

The style guide should contain the colors, fonts, logos, and other guidelines that define the developed brand. The vision is to use this guide for further asset development in the future, either by the MassTech team or other contracted agencies.

Video

23. In Section 2.2, Phase 2, the RFP states, "Video content creation for social media accounts that highlight current events in the robotics ecosystem." Could you clarify what you mean by current events in this context? For example, would this video content creation entail gathering press/stock photos from events and editing them into shareable pieces on social media? Or would you anticipate the awarded vendor sending video teams to robotics conferences, trade shows, product demos, keynote speeches, etc.? If the latter, how often do you foresee these events occurring?

Video content creation requires that the contractor gather footage from local robotics events that MassTech either attends or sponsors, approximately 3-4 events per year. It also entails gathering footage from some local companies and incubators.

24. In Phase 2, do you have an idea of the volume of video content creation for social media that you are envisioning? Are bullets 1 and 4 related in terms of volume?

- a. Is the design and production of the number of videos for phase 1 and 2 firm or is there any flexibility to reduce that number?**

This is specified in the RFP, Section 2.2 in the description of Phase 2 of the work (page 4). In summary, we hope to have 24 2-3 minute videos as well as 24 30-second videos.

This is the minimum number of videos required, and there is no flexibility to reduce the number.

- 25. Does new video need to be captured for phase 2 videos or can phase 1 footage be recut for the additional 24 videos?**

We envision that Phase 1 footage will be recut for additional videos. The only caveat is if MassTech attends an important event during Phase 2 of the work and we would like to include footage from that event in the videos.

Website

- 26. On Page 3, it's mentioned that design files must be compatible with DRUPAL . Is DRUPAL the required CMS for the website portion of the project or can the proposal include other CMS platforms?**

DRUPAL is the required CMS.

- 27. Is the creation of the website as described in Phase 1 a full development and design exercise, or a redesign of existing website content? If net new, is the respondent to develop all content copy, user experience and design?**

MassTech requires the creation of a new website, and the respondent is responsible for developing all content, as well as user experience and design.

- 28. You specify design files for a website and that hosting will be on your domain: Are you also building the site or asking the selected agency to do so?**

MassTech is asking the selected agency to build the website template and content that MassTech will then deploy.

- 29. In Phase 1 you specify that the social media accounts will be managed by MassTech, but in Phase 2 you mention that the MassTech will review and approve content to be posted. Are you anticipating that the agency would then do the posting?**

The agency will submit posts on a specified schedule by email, to be approved and posted by MassTech. The agency will create and set up the social media accounts and provide MassTech with the credentials.

30. What level of involvement and collaboration is expected from the MassTech Communications Department throughout the brand creation and campaign execution? How will the selected firm ensure alignment with MassTech's branding requirements and work closely with the department?

The MassTech Communications Department will approve all materials before deploying or ordering them. To ensure a mutual vision, the Robotics Department plans to set regular meetings with the selected agency and the Communications Department.

TIMELINE OF DELIVERABLES

31. Within both Phase 1 and Phase 2, is there a cadence you have in mind for the release of videos? i.e., One per week, Three per quarter, etc.?

This cadence will be set in early discussions with the selected agency and MassTech's Communications Department and will be scheduled in advance.

32. Can you provide more details on the expected timeline and deliverables for Phase 2 of the campaign, including the number and length of videos to be produced, frequency of social media posts, and plans for digital advertising and tradeshow assets? How flexible is the timeline if the campaign needs to be adjusted based on results and audience feedback?

All funds for this contract must be spent by December 31, 2026. Because of the approval process with the Communications Department and the need to plan ahead, there is limited flexibility to pivot the campaign after deciding on a strategy.

33. Can you confirm the goal contract start date?

The latest start date is December 31, 2024.

34. In terms of project milestones, what is the projected phase 1 start date, projected campaign go live date and projected phase 2 start date?

All work for this RFP will start on December 31, 2024 at the latest, and end on December 31, 2026 at the latest. Campaign milestones such as a go live date will be a topic of early conversation with the chosen contractor.