

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) Public Relations (PR) & Strategic Communications Services

02/12/2026

Detroit Elevate

1. INTRODUCTION: Detroit Elevate is seeking proposals from qualified Public Relations (PR) firms to support our communications, brand visibility, and stakeholder engagement efforts. The selected firm will work closely with our team to enhance our public image, increase awareness of our programs, and deliver strategic communications aligned with organizational goals.

2. BACKGROUND: Detroit Elevate represents TechTown and the Gilbert Family Foundation's commitment to cultivating the Detroit second stage business ecosystem. Our primary mission is to help elevate Detroit's growth stage entrepreneurs by impacting their business through targeting their needs and giving them resources. In collaboration with founding partners TechTown and Gilbert Family Foundation, we are dedicated to developing local entrepreneurs through initiatives that grow network access and provide robust programming. This includes workshops, gatherings, panels, and educational events hosted in Detroit. TechTown is a prominent non-profit entrepreneurship hub and business accelerator. To illustrate this holistic impact and engage our stakeholders, we require professional and visual assets that showcase both our second stage business owners and our vibrant community events.

3. SCOPE OF WORK: The scope of work will have a maximum cap of \$20,000 to be paid out to the PR firm that is chosen. TechTown will be reviewing all proposals and has the right to refuse any proposal if it is not a good fit for the Elevate Program. The PR firm will be expected to provide services for one year that include:

- **Media Relations (Local & National):** Securing coverage in top-tier local and national outlets, with a specific focus on Brick and Mortar and E-Commerce verticals.
- **Entrepreneur Storytelling:** Proven ability to create compelling, human-centric narratives for Entrepreneurs and Second stage business ventures that resonate with investors and the public.
- **Growth-Centered Storytelling:** Developing a consistent narrative that aligns strictly with our brand identity and mission.
- **Social Media Management:** Full management of platforms (specifically Instagram), including strategy, copy, and engagement.
- **Event & Promotional Content:** Generation of promotional content for events and launches to drive attendance and visibility.
- **Distribution Strategy:** Management of both Physical and Digital distribution of materials to print and digital media outlets.
- **Cross-Vendor Collaboration:** Collaboration with Detroit Elevates **content capture and production partner** (e.g., photography, video, and multimedia) to ensure cohesive storytelling, effective use of visual assets, and alignment across earned, owned, and shared media.
- **Crisis communication guidance** (as needed).

4. DELIVERABLES: The selected firm should deliver the following, with the understanding that respondents are asked to propose a **12-month strategic public relations plan**, while the **initial contract term will be six (6) months**, with the option to renew for additional six (6) month periods:

- A **12-month strategic PR plan** outlining goals, key messages, target audiences, timeline, and KPIs.
- **Twenty five (25) founder stories** developed during the contract term, with a **minimum of two (2) receiving external media distribution**.
- **Thirty (30) social media posts**, which may support events, campaigns, or independent storytelling initiatives.
- **At least two (2) secured placements** in major local or national media outlets, including a **minimum of one (1) placement highlighting the Detroit Elevate program**.
- Development of **one (1) brand kit**, including core messaging, visual guidelines, and foundational brand assets.
- **Monthly content calendar management**, inclusive of social media and related digital content.
- **Monthly performance reports** summarizing media activity, placements, metrics, and progress toward stated KPIs.
- Ongoing **media relations support**, including press releases, media kits, and thought-leadership content as appropriate.
- **Regular check-ins and strategy sessions** with Detroit Elevate staff to assess performance and refine approach.

5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS: Interested firms must submit:

- Company overview and relevant experience in the Second stage entrepreneur space.
- Bios of key team members who will support the project.
- Examples or links to past work, specifically stories regarding second stage businesses.
- Proposed strategy and approach tailored to our organization.
- Proposed pricing structure and estimated annual budget.
- At least three (3) client references.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA: Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and success with Brick and mortar, and E-Commerce companies.
- Strength of network in Local and National Technology media.
- Demonstrated understanding of brand-centered storytelling.
- Ability to manage omni-channel distribution (Physical/Digital/Social).
- Cost competitiveness and value.
- Quality of references.

7. TIMELINE:

- RFP Issued: 02/12/2026
- Deadline for Questions: 2/19/2026

- Proposal Submission Deadline: 2/23/2026
- Firm Selected: 2/27/2026
- Project Start Date: 3/2/2026
- Project End Date: 12/31/26
- Final Invoice received: no later than 1/5/27

8. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Proposals must be submitted electronically to: Marcus Reliford, TechTown Detroit, marcus@techtowndetroit.org.

9. TERMS: Detroit Elevate reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, request additional information, or negotiate terms as necessary. While respondents are asked to propose a **12-month strategic public relations plan**, any resulting agreement is expected to **initially commence as a six (6) month engagement**. Detroit Elevate may, at its sole discretion, **renew the agreement for additional six (6) month terms**, subject to satisfactory performance, mutual agreement, and availability of funds.