

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Client: **Dorcas Place**
Project: **Public Relations Language, Tactics, Campaign Development**
Completion Date: **Through 2012**

Background: Dorcas Place

Since 1981, Dorcas Place Adult and Family Learning Center has been giving low-income Rhode Islanders the educational opportunities they need to realize their full potential and climb the ladder to success—through literacy, workplace training, college preparatory programs, and employment.

Mission and Values

Our mission is to assist low-income adults in realizing their full potential through literacy, employment, advocacy and community involvement. In carrying out this mission we embrace these values: advocacy, collaboration, community, family, empowerment, compassion, diversity, hospitality, life-long learning, respect and responsibility.

Strategic Goals

- Build on the diversity of student strengths by expanding the scope and array of our educational services and enhancing the delivery of these services.
- Determine the effectiveness of our programs and services through evaluations and outcomes studies.
- Effectively target the communications and marketing efforts of the agency.
- Strategically expand collaborations and similar joint efforts with other agencies, as well as strengthen community relations.
- Expand the base of our advocacy in the state, city and community for adult basic education and the needs of our students.
- Achieve more effective partnering with businesses.
- Gain greater clarity regarding the role of the Board and the Advisory Committee and the working relationship between Board and staff.
- Attain more tactical and strategic interface between the Board Building Committee and staff and program development needs.
- Explore revenue-generating potential of our core competencies.

Our History

Dorcas Place incorporated in 1981 as a private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) adult literacy and learning center. While we are not a faith-based organization, the organization was founded by Mary Reilly, Sister of Mercy, and Deborah Thompson, Mercy Associate, as part of an urban ministry program in South Providence. Their vision to develop a literacy program for single parents grew out of their work with teen mothers in Providence's inner city.

Dorcas Place was named after a woman in the New Testament who dedicated her life to feeding and clothing the poor. *Dorcas* means "filled with good things," and *Place* refers to the place within. The founders believed that by nurturing this place within, Dorcas Place would enable our students to become powerful changers of their own and their children's lives, and the community in which they live. They were right.

Over the past 20 years, Dorcas Place has sought to advocate for and with low-income parents and other adults in order to expand public and private awareness of, and response to, the needs of this population. Our programs

recognize the direct link between illiteracy and the problems of long-term welfare dependency, children growing up in poverty, teenage pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, crime and chronic unemployment.

Background: International Institute Rhode Island

The International Institute Rhode Island provides high-quality educational, legal, and social services to immigrants and refugees throughout Rhode Island and southeastern New England. Fundamental to all our programs and services is the promotion of self-sufficiency -- giving clients tools to help themselves become active participants in the social, political & economic richness of American life. We also provide a full range of interpreting and translating services and community education and training programs.

Our Mission

International Institute of Rhode Island's mission is to enable all area residents, especially immigrants and refugees, to become self-reliant, invested participants in our communities, while fostering respect and understanding among all people.

Our History

The International Institute of Rhode Island has provided educational, legal and social services to immigrants and refugees throughout Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts since 1921. Housed originally in two rooms on Weybosset Street and dedicated to providing casework and support to a few hundred immigrant women and their families, the Institute now inhabits a three-story building on Elmwood Avenue in South Providence. The affiliated International Charter School is located on 334 Pleasant Street in Pawtucket.

Today, the International Institute of Rhode Island is an independent non-profit agency providing more than 20,000 services to immigrant, refugee and native-born individuals and families each year.

Our Vision For the Future

We dare to dream of a future in which:

- The International Institute of Rhode Island will be the leading comprehensive resource for new immigrants and refugees and a multicultural information center for all Rhode Islanders.
- Every individual has the opportunity to learn to speak, read, and write English and to experience the values inherent in other languages.
- All legal residents can achieve U.S. citizenship at a cost within their means.
- All individuals have access to affordable health education and services.
- All individuals have access to basic job training and readiness opportunities.
- All who need it have the translation and interpreting services required to ensure their access to essential services.
- All of our children will experience the value of an education offered in a multicultural, multilingual environment.
- Diversity is cherished as one of this nation's outstanding resources.

Opportunity and Goals

Dorcas Place (DP) and International Institute Rhode Island (IIRI) are investigating the possibility of a merger. Because these organizations share related missions—with the merger offering potential to deepen some service offerings and to broaden others—we see this idea as an opportunity to serve our clients more effectively.

As a merged organization, we would be able to use resources more impactfully, provide an expanded menu of services to better prepare at-risk Rhode Islanders for greater financial security and job stability, and develop innovative programs that can deliver useful metrics for policymakers.

Considering the size of both organizations, we anticipate the possibility that word of the change may spread abroad sooner than expected. To that end, we are seeking the development of a public relations plan to help us prepare for that possibility so that we can deliver the message in an appropriate manner.

We are in search of a firm to present ideas and methods we can use to tell our story effectively. Our goal is to create support for the merger (both within and without of the organization), and to strengthen our growing reputation as the go-to resource for information on the matter of adult education and its role in preparing all Rhode Islanders to satisfy the changing labor needs of local industries.

This PR project will lay the foundation for a broader communications plan, which may include a variety of marcomm strategies throughout the merger process. Those marcomm strategies are not included in this project but they will be influenced by your firm's recommendations about how to manage the telling of the story.

Specifically, the successful bidder will:

- **Craft language** that we can use to tell the story, both internally and externally, and provide an orientation and training as needed to staff and volunteers of both organizations so they are empowered to advocate for the organization in the community.
- **Identify tactics for implementation** of that message, to include mass media, social media, and audience-specific communications to be shared with all stakeholders (clients, donors, policymakers, and the like).
- **Develop a campaign** to manage the controlled dissemination of this information in an appropriate manner, to include recommendations regarding timelines, strategy, and desired outcomes.

Current Communications Resources

Both Dorcas Place and International Institute have a number of communications tools already in place. Any or all of these can be used for this public relations outreach effort and can be considered in your proposal.

- Website (www.dorcasplace.org, www.iiri.org)
- Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/DorcasPlace>, <https://www.facebook.com/pages/International-Institute-Rhode-Island/311659001738>)
- Twitter page (<https://twitter.com/#!/DorcasPlace>)
- E-newsletter
- Printed collateral
- Various events for stakeholder groups

Current Staff/Volunteer Resources

Both Dorcas Place and International Institute have a number of talented staffpeople with a wide variety of skill sets. We value our staff as frontline advocates for our mission. As such, this PR plan should include some accommodation to share the story first with them, then with a larger public.

In addition, some of these staff can be called on to apply their talents to this public relations outreach effort and can be considered in your proposal.

- Leadership
- Development personnel (events, grantwriting)
- Financial management personnel
- Volunteer teachers/mentors
- Community of advocates/past participants who support current participants

Proposal Requirements

Your proposal should include:

- Description of your firm's history, specifically background of the principal and all account managers
- Description of your firm's experience working with nonprofit organizations—specifically in Rhode Island and/or in the educational field)
- Scope of services you provide; if provided through a subcontractor, identify those organizations.
- Three client references
- Costs for all services—both terminal and ongoing—to include monthly retainer fees and a list of services that are included in that fee.

Budget

For this PR project, we have budgeted a monthly retainer of \$XXXX, to cover approximately 20 hours per month.

Please provide a list of the services and deliverables that you provide and an approximate number of hours to perform each (e.g., drafting and placement of press releases, quantity of posts on social media, drafting of newsletter articles, drafting and placement of radio spots, etc).

Deliverables for the project will include a written PR plan that provides language, tactics that can be implemented (by you and/or by our staff) to tell the story, and the outline of a campaign to manage the controlled dissemination of information.

Next Steps

All proposals are due via email no later than Friday, March 2, 2012. Please submit all responses to NAME at EMAIL ADDRESS. We will evaluate all proposals and will notify all bidders no later than Friday, March 9, 2012. Work will commence immediately following award of the contract.

Notes

All information disclosed in this Request for Proposal is confidential, and is governed by the Dorcas Place Unilateral Confidential Disclosure Agreement.