



Hudson Square
Business Improvement District

180 Varick Street, Suite 422
New York, NY 10014

212.463.9160
HudsonSquareBID.com
info@hudsonsquarebid.org
@HudsonSquareNYC

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Hudson Square Public Relations Services

January 6, 2025

Hudson Square Business Improvement District

Jeffrey Sussman, Chair
Samara Karasyk, President

Proposals due on Friday, January 31, 2025
Submit questions by January 13, 2025
schangar@hudsonsquarebid.org



Background

Since July 2009, the Hudson Square Business Improvement District (HSBID) has overseen the transformation of Manhattan's former Printing District into a thriving creative hub. We foster a sense of community by creating inspiring public spaces, enhancing and maintaining the built environment, and connecting the people who work here to the physical neighborhood and each other. Our mission is to propel, support, and celebrate this unique neighborhood and its people. Our area is generally bounded by Clarkson Street on the north, Canal Street on the south, 6th Avenue on the east, and West Street on the west.

We are unique as a Business Improvement District in that our focus has always been planning, developing, constructing, and maintaining capital projects that transform our streets, sidewalks, and open spaces. Surrounded by SoHo, Tribeca, and the West Village, the neighborhood is defined by its creative industries, unique and cohesive architecture, and vibrant streets. The area is primarily commercial, with a growing residential community.

The Hudson Square neighborhood has emerged as a thriving, dynamic community that continues to attract some of the most exciting global brands and creative powerhouses. With Google and Disney choosing to make Hudson Square their home and world-class agencies like Publicis, Edelman, and Anomaly here, the neighborhood is solidifying its reputation as a hub for innovation and creativity. Adding to the vibrancy, a wave of acclaimed culinary destinations is further transforming the area, making Hudson Square a place where work, culture, and life converge seamlessly.

The HSBID's programs include neighborhood maintenance, Pedestrian Safety Managers (crossing guards along Varick Street), the award-winning Hudson Square Standard urban forestry tree program, a robust public art program, and the nationally recognized Hudson Square is Now streetscape improvement program, our \$27 million public-private partnership with the City of New York, completed in the summer of 2022. We are in the 3rd year of our 2nd 10-Year Streetscape Improvement Plan, which guides our capital project priorities for the decade and builds upon lessons learned about open space, mobility, and community.

Over the last year, our refreshed brand has gained momentum in the market, reflecting Hudson Square's energy and evolution. As we enter the next phase of our transformation, we seek a Public Relations Agency to collaborate closely with our branding agency to amplify our narrative, engage diverse audiences, and cement our identity as a creative and cultural hub ready for the future.

Scope of Work:

HSBID seeks a dynamic Public Relations Agency to amplify and continue establishing our neighborhood as a downtown creative and technology hub while fostering a connected, vibrant community. As a catalyst for transformation, HSBID has driven significant achievements—from public art initiatives to streetscape revitalizations—and now requires expert storytelling to communicate its impact. The agency will help strengthen relationships with media and third-party advocates, position HSBID as a thought leader, and secure press coverage, awards, and speaking opportunities that elevate the organization's profile. By engaging diverse audiences—elected officials, property owners, corporate decision-makers, residents, and the local workforce—the PR agency will be pivotal in promoting HSBID's initiatives, celebrating milestones, supporting local businesses, and amplifying Hudson Square's unique identity.

This partnership will ensure that HSBID's mission to connect, inspire, and innovate resonates widely, both locally and beyond.

The Selected Agency will collaborate with HSBID and other consultants as identified; it will host a kickoff meeting and follow up with bi-weekly team meetings. The following is a list of deliverables from previous years that have been included to provide an idea of volume and specificity but may change as needs evolve. Please use this list to estimate costs and timelines in your response.

Objectives + Services:

1. **Media Relations:**
 - Position HSBID leadership as experts and advocates in urban planning and public space management.
 - Build and maintain relationships with media outlets.
 - Leverage influencers and neighborhood “champions” to amplify awareness.
 - Strengthen relationships with third-party allies that align with HSBID’s mission.
 - Coordinate media events, including press conferences, ribbon cuttings, and ceremonial events.
2. **Increase Brand Awareness through press coverage and strategic communications:**
 - Create a strategic communication plan that includes annual goals and monthly projects to help achieve those goals.
 - Develop story angles.
 - Identify publications and press to target.
 - Position Hudson Square as a downtown creative and technology hub.
 - Share compelling stories about the BID’s impact, initiatives, and partnerships.
 - Secure coverage in local, citywide, and industry/trade publications.
 - Monthly progress report.
 - Bi-weekly meetings with HSBID team (can be digital, with face-to-face meetings every 6-8 weeks).
3. **Engage the Community:**
 - Build pride in Hudson Square through diverse, vibrant storytelling.
 - Integrate physical and digital experiences to connect with residents, workers, and visitors.
 - Support local businesses by sharing their unique narratives.
 - Hudson Square’s main businesses are above-ground tenants in larger commercial spaces.
 - Ground-floor retail remains an important part of the story (there are less than 200 of them within the district).
 - Build the Conversation
 - Encourage dialogue and engagement through social media and other channels.
 - Generate participation through contests, polls, and interactive content.
4. **Focus on Civic and Cultural Impact:**
 - Highlight Hudson Square’s role as a cultural and civic leader beyond events or promotions.
5. **Establish Thought Leadership:**
 - Develop and place op-eds, white papers, and thought leadership pieces.
 - Secure opportunities for HSBID leadership to participate in panels and conferences.
 - Place stories about streetscape and open space accomplishments in public space and landscape architecture publications.
6. **Awards and Nominations:**
 - Identify and secure relevant organizational and individual accolades.
7. **Amplify Projects and Milestones:**
 - Promote public art initiatives and space improvements.
 - Celebrate achievements and gain public recognition.
8. **Crisis Management (as needed):**
 - Provide guidance and support during unforeseen challenges.



Proposal Submission Timeline and Process

Agencies interested in submitting proposals to provide such services should follow the instructions in this Request for Proposals (RFP). Proposals should be prepared by providing a straightforward and concise description of the responding Agency's capabilities to satisfy the RFP's requirements. If you choose to respond to this RFP, please deliver a copy of your proposal and work samples as a PDF (no more than 5 MB in size) via email:

Suzy Changar
SVP Communication + Marketing
Hudson Square Business Improvement District
Subject line: Hudson Square Public Relations
schangar@hudsonsquarebid.org

The schedule for the selection process:

January 6	RFP issued
January 13	Agencies submit questions and their interest
January 17	HSBID supplies answers to all interested agencies
January 31	RFP due by midnight
March 10-28th	Conduct interviews with potential candidates
Week of April 1	Agency selected
May or June	Agency commences work with HSBID

All submissions must be received **on Friday, January 31st.** Late submissions will not be considered.

Please include the following as part of your submission:

Why Hudson Square?

- What excites you about the opportunity to work with the HSBID?
- What makes HSBID unique compared to other Business Improvement Districts and similar organizations?
- What do you like about our current messaging?
- Any areas you feel are lacking or ripe for improvement? If so, what areas?

Experience, structure, and personnel

- Scope of Work, Objectives + Services, including a brief project narrative that describes the agency's overall approach, a timeline outlining the tools needed to be up and running, and a measurement plan including the metrics proposed to determine success.
- Name of primary contact/project manager who would work directly on this project. Please include the title, years of experience in this role/at the agency, area of expertise, and all contact information.
- Describe the structure of the team working on this project (number, titles, and the flow of communication between HSBID and the Agency.)
 - Describe how the teams are managed.
 - Include each team member's subject area of expertise.
 - How many accounts do they work on simultaneously.
- Three (3) references from clients for whom you are/have provided comparable services (include name and contact information).
- Any information you believe would make your work for HSBID superior to other agencies.



Process

- Please explain how much time you need to start a new project.
- How you work internally – managing a project and working with clients.
- Any other relevant information regarding the process you want to share.

Fee

- Total cost for the overall project, expressed as a monthly retainer.
- Fee for additional services not covered.
 - Please provide a list of potential services.
 - Hourly fee for each team member assigned to this account.
- Additional fees/costs for clipping services, video clips, etc.

Note: General, overhead, and administrative costs are expected to be included in the monthly labor fee. All contingencies and/or anticipated escalations are assumed to be included.

HSBID reserves the right to amend, modify, or withdraw this RFP, to revise any requirements, to require supplemental statements or information from any firm, to accept or reject any or all responses hereto, to extend the deadline for submission for responses thereto, to negotiate or hold discussions with any responses and to waive defects and allow corrections of deficient responses which do not completely conform to the instructions contained herein and to cancel this RFP in whole or in part if HSBID deems it in its best interest to do so. HSBID may exercise the foregoing rights at any time without notice and without liability to any proposing firm or any other party for their expenses incurred in the preparation of the responses hereto or otherwise. Responses to this RFP will be prepared at the sole cost and expense of the responding Agency. HSBID assumes no responsibility or liability for costs incurred by the responding Agency(s) prior to the issuance of a contract.

Questions and your interest in responding to this RFP must be submitted in writing via email to schangar@hudsonsquarebid.org by **Monday, January 13, 2023.**

Selection Criteria

In evaluating proposals submitted pursuant to this request, HSBID will consider the following factors, not necessarily listed in order of importance:

- Quality of the proposal (approach to Scope of Work and Objectives + Services as defined above).
- Quality of related work experience, including examples provided.
- Experience and qualifications.
- References.
- Cost of services.
- Enthusiasm for the mission of the HSBID organization.

Please indicate if your firm is located in Hudson Square and/or a certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)/ Women Owned Business Enterprise (WBE). Firms meeting either/both of these criteria will be looked upon favorably. Please indicate where your firm is located; being based in New York City is preferable as our work is hyper-local.

No single objective will constitute the basis for selection. HSBID is not required to accept the lowest-cost proposal. The contents of the proposal prepared by the successful Agency, with any amendments approved by HSBID, will serve as the basis for the contract awarded as a result of this RFP process. The terms outlined below should be considered all-inclusive.



- Work with HSBID staff and stakeholders on an as-needed basis to create and execute a comprehensive and compelling public relations strategy.
- Work with HSBID consultants as directed, including but not limited to branding/graphic design, web programmer, event consultants, etc...
- Refrain from assigning, transferring, conveying subletting, or otherwise disposing of the contract or its rights, titles, or interest therein or its power to execute such agreement to any other person, agency, partnership, company, or corporation without the prior consent and approval in writing from HSBID.
- Agency will be responsible for obtaining all necessary licensing and rights before work is performed and provide a copy to HSBID.

Contract terms and conditions

Selected Agency will be awarded a three-year (3) contract, with the option of HSBID to renew up to two (2) additional years for a total of five (5) years. The following are some of the conditions that will be included in the agreement:

- Agency shall be acting as an independent contractor.
- All materials prepared under the contract will be a “work made for hire” and belong entirely to HSBID.
- HSBID may terminate the agreement at any time at its sole discretion, with or without cause, upon ten (10) days written notice.
- Agency may not assign or subcontract the agreement without the express written consent of HSBID.
- HSBID shall have the right to transfer the agreement to the City of New York or any agency having the authority to accept such assignment.
- Agency shall keep accurate books and records which shall be available for audit and/or inspection upon three (3) business days’ notice, both during the agreement period and for three (3) years after the date of your final payment.
- Agreement shall be effective, subject to, and no payments shall be made prior to selected Agency’s successful completion of a PASSPort (formerly VENDEX) review by the City, and neither HSBID nor the City shall be liable to Agency if Agreement is terminated because of a determination by the City that Agency has failed such review.
- The Agreement will be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of New York and submit to the jurisdiction of the courts of the State of New York, County of New York.

The issuance of this RFP and the submission of a response by any responding Agency(s) or acceptance of such response by the Hudson Square Business Improvement District does not obligate the Hudson Square Business Improvement District in any manner. Legal obligations will only arise on the execution of a formal agreement by HSBID and the Agency selected.