



# Request for Proposal

## Marketing Services Engagement

### About Clark State College

Clark State College is a comprehensive community college in Springfield, Ohio, serving Clark, Greene, Champaign, and Logan Counties in Western Ohio. Students also come from neighboring counties outside of the service area, including Montgomery, Madison, Miami, and others. Clark State has five campus locations – the main location on Leffel Lane in Springfield; Downtown Springfield; the Greene Center in Beavercreek; the REACH Center in Xenia; and Ohio Hi-Point in Bellefontaine.

Clark State's mission is to engage and empower diverse learners by providing high-quality educational programs and services that emphasize student and community success. As an open enrollment institution, Clark State works to ensure that all students feel that they belong. The college offers a wide variety of educational options, ranging from workforce trainings and short-term certificates, to associate degrees and three applied bachelor's degrees. Programs work closely with area industry experts to ensure that programs meet the needs of local businesses so graduates can enter careers prepared to be an asset to their team.

Wright Patterson Air Force Base (WPAFB), Ohio's largest single-site employer, is located in Greene and Montgomery Counties, making it partially located within Clark State's service area. WPAFB is located about 20 miles from Clark State's main campus location and less than 5 miles from its Greene Center location. The 178th Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard is located about 6 miles from Clark State's main campus location. This proximity has resulted in strong relationships between Clark State and both WPAFB and the 178th Wing. It also means that there is an above average population of active-duty military, Air National Guard, and veterans in Clark State's service area.

Clark State College is an established choice for higher education, especially as it relates to program choices in Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare. The college's facilities are attractive and student-friendly and include a dedicated laboratory for manufacturing and engineering technology. In recent years, the college has added new programs to meet the needs of employers in advanced manufacturing, including Laser Materials Processing and a pending program in Modeling and Simulation. Health care offerings have also expanded with the addition of new nursing programs and diagnostic medical sonography. As such, Clark State is poised to be the educator of choice across an employee's career with its stackable credential model that can be mixed, matched, and customized from Quick Path (non-credit) short term training to credit-bearing certificates and degrees.

Clark State also enrolls a significant number of dual enrollment high school students (College Credit Plus or CCP) who account for approximately 30% of student enrollment. The majority of these students take courses that fulfill general education requirements and pursue their degrees at four-year colleges and universities.

Student success is a shared goal at the college and is supported through programming and holistic support. The college has been intentional in its efforts to increase student success through curricular changes and innovative student success initiatives. The college has seen growth in the number of credentials awarded over the past several years and expects this trend to continue.

## **Request for Proposal (RFP) for Marketing Services Engagement**

The Clark State leadership team sees an opportunity to relaunch the Clark State brand to focus on training that leads to in-demand high-wage careers that meet local labor market demand for a skilled workforce.

As Ohio becomes a center for advanced manufacturing, including semi-conductors (Intel), electrical vehicle batteries (Honda-LG) and their suppliers there is unprecedented demand for skilled technicians. Clark State also expects that graduates of its health care programs, especially nursing, will continue to be highly recruited.

While demand for Clark State's health care programs is strong, the college is concerned that other prospective students do not understand the opportunities available in Advanced Manufacturing and hold negative stereotypes associated with older manufacturing processes and that they are unaware of the positive wage and salary trends associated with these industries.

The college also understands that prospective students often question the value of higher education, are concerned about cost, and fear student debt. At the same time, Clark State has one of the lowest tuition rates in Ohio, helps students get financial support, and offers a superior educational experience.

The leadership team suggest the following:

1. Brand and Website audit (See [www.clarkstate.edu](http://www.clarkstate.edu))
2. Develop a monitoring strategy using analytics to better understand website user activity.
3. Update the messaging, expression, and creative identity to reflect the desired focus, to include content development without website redesign.
  - Use local labor market data to develop student and career profiles.
4. Improve the user experience of the website.
  - Organize and update content.

### **Goals**

- Increase engagement, applications, and overall enrollment
- Align content and messaging toward desired focus to demonstrate the existing collaboration between Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Marketing.
- Increase awareness and visibility as leaders in Healthcare, Advanced Manufacturing, and Transfer pathways.
- Increase Clark State employees and community members awareness to support and promote Clark State programs.

### **Target Audiences**

- Current and prospective students, with a focus on:
  - Recent high school graduates
  - Adult students
  - Unemployed
  - Underemployed
  - Students with some credits, but no degree
- Business and Industry

## Proposal Components

Proposals should address the following questions and requests for information.

- Proposals shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length.
- Additional information regarding your firm and services may be included as addenda to the proposal and will not count toward the ten (10) pages. Such information, however, will be considered at the College's discretion.

### 1. Approach to Providing Client-Focused, Outcome-Driven Marketing Services

- a. Explain the method(s) you would employ to assist the College in achieving the outcomes outlined in the RFP. In general terms, please highlight the areas of focus that your firm will be targeting as part of this engagement.
- b. Describe and provide documentation supporting the performance of your firm in helping clients achieve a notable positive impact with their marketing efforts.

### 2. Experience of the Firm

- a. Provide a brief description of the firm, including organizational structure, years in business, and depth of experience in the higher education industry (specifically to community colleges, as applicable).
- b. Provide brief resumes describing the industry experience of the primary and/or secondary principal staff that would be assigned to this engagement
- c. Provide a list of college and university clients that your firm has and/or does currently work with and identify the nature of that engagement. From this list, please provide contact information for up to three that would be willing to serve as a reference for your firm.

### 3. Non-Discrimination

The firm shall certify in its proposal that:

- it is in compliance with all applicable equal employment opportunity requirements under law as required by Section 153.59 of the Ohio Revised Code and any other applicable state or federal laws; and
- it will not discriminate in the hiring of employees for the performance of work under this contract against any citizen of the state who is qualified and available to perform the work to which this contract relates on the basis of race, creed, sex, color, or disability, as defined in Section 4112.01 of the Ohio Revised Code.

### 4. Fee Arrangement

- a. Provide your proposed fee(s) and payment terms.
- b. Describe terms for cancellation of the contract.

If the decision is to go forward with a Marketing Services Engagement, the College will enter into negotiations on fee(s) and payment terms with selected firm(s). The College has the right to cease negotiations with selected firm(s) if it is not satisfied with the negotiations. In this event the College has the right to begin negotiations with another firm.

## Request for Proposals Schedule (subject to change)

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|----------------------------|--|
| • September 15, 2023       | Request for Proposals released   |
| • September 29 2023        | Questions due by 12:00 p.m. (noon) local time (responses posted as received) |
| • October 6, 2023          | Proposals due by 12:00 p.m. (noon) local time                                |
| • October 11, 2023         | Notification sent to firms selected for interviews                           |
| • Week of October 16, 2023 | Interviews Scheduled   |
| • Week of October 23, 2023 | Firm selection and notification  |

## Proposal Submission Requirements

Proposals must address all questions and required services detailed in this RFP, and shall not exceed ten (10) pages in length. As noted above, additional information regarding your firm and services may be included as addenda to the proposal and will not count toward the ten (10) pages. Such information, however, will be considered at the College's discretion. Proposals can be submitted via email to the following:

Clark State College  
Attention: Crystal Jones  
570 E. Leffel Lane  
Springfield, Ohio 45505  
jonesc@clarkstate.edu

The email subject containing the proposals shall be clearly marked on the front: "PROPOSAL FOR MARKETING SERVICES ENGAGEMENT".

## Other Terms and Conditions

Firms responding to the RFP should not directly contact the President, the Executive Leadership team, their respective staff, or any College or Foundation Board members concerning the RFP from the date hereof until the selection process has been completed.

The College reserves the right to cancel and withdraw this request for proposals and to reject any and/or all proposals submitted.

The College reserves the right to conduct an interview with any or all of the firms submitting a proposal and to request additional information from any or all of the firms as the College deems necessary and appropriate.

The College reserves the right to modify the RFP schedule as needed.