

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 17, 2012

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pacifica Delegate Election Management and/or Balloting Services

The Pacifica Foundation (Pacifica) is a 501(c)(3) membership-based radio broadcasting organization with approximately 75,000 members nationwide, affiliated with stations in New York, Houston, Washington D.C., Los Angeles, and Berkeley.

On or about March 1, 2012, Pacifica will begin a process that will involve ten separate elections wherein members in four of its five signal areas will elect nine (9) listener delegates and three (3) staff delegates to serve on Local Station Boards. Members of the fifth station will elect eighteen (18) listener-member delegates and six (6) staff delegates.

Pacifica is now soliciting proposals from qualified election management organizations to provide all or some of the services related to these elections.

We invite your organization to submit a proposal **by February 10, 2012** for

- (a) National/Local Elections Supervisor functions;
- (b) Balloting & Tabulation functions; or
- (c) Some combination thereof

Please find enclosed an outline of the information needed in the proposal, followed by details of the specific services required. Proposals for multi-year contracts may be considered.

Important Please Note – The National Election Supervisor (NES) is responsible for Balloting & Tabulation functions. Therefore, proposals to provide some, but not all, Election Management services described in this RFP must demonstrate clear understanding of the entire scope of work required and identify the anticipated process whereby the remaining services will be fulfilled (i.e., through subcontractors, individuals, or other organizations).

Past elections have been via paper ballot. The successful applicant for Balloting & Tabulation services will have the ability to advise and guide Pacifica on process(es) to transition to electronic balloting. Cost proposals for balloting should recognize a likely mix of paper and electronic voting and identify, with as much specificity as practical, any cost differentials that may result from the actual mixture.

All election processes must adhere to provisions of [The Pacifica Foundation Bylaws](http://pacifica.org/kewg.org/bylaws/index.html) [<http://pacifica.org/kewg.org/bylaws/index.html>]: See Article 3 Sections 1-4, 7, 8, 10; Article 4 Sections 1 - 8; Article 7 (all); and Article 15 (all)].

Pacifica's Executive Director Arlene Engelhardt will select the NES, working with the Elections Committee of the Pacifica National Board. Final decisions concerning a contract for Balloting & Tabulation services, if distinct from a contract for the NES, will be made by the NES, working with Ms. Engelhardt and the Elections Committee.

The Elections Committee will evaluate proposals on a qualitative basis that will include the completeness and timeliness of the response, a review of references and related materials, interviews with senior personnel to be assigned to the project, and results of discussions with other clients.

Please prepare your proposal following the format of the outline provided and submit, along with any supporting materials you would like to have considered to:

Mr. Michael Novick, Secretary
Pacifica National Board Elections Committee
Pacificaproposals@gmail.com

Key Contacts for information you may seek in preparing your proposal are:

Ms. Arlene Engelhardt, Executive Director
Pacifica Foundation
arlene@pacificafoundation.org
510-849-2590

Ms. Carolyn Birden, Chair
Pacifica National Board Elections Committee
Pacificaproposals@gmail.com
917-520-1268

Attachments

- (a) Proposal Outline
- (b) Details of Services Required – NES/LES
- (c) Details of Services Required - Balloting & Tabulation
- (d) 2012 Elections Timeline

**Pacifica 2012 Delegate Election Management Services
PROPOSAL OUTLINE**

Please indicate which Elections services you propose to provide:

- All
- National/Local Election Supervisor functions alone;
- Balloting & Tabulation functions alone; or
- Partial Combination

Implementation

1. Describe how your company will approach the 2012 delegate elections, including staffing structure you propose to interact with Pacifica in administering this contract. Identify by name(s) and roles all personnel who will be assigned to this project.
2. Describe specific outreach efforts, if any, that you would recommend and, if approved, implement to encourage, involve, and increase participation by members in the elections. [**Note** – failure to attain quorum has been a problem in some prior elections]
3. For Balloting services, describe your
 - * systems for ensuring ballot integrity and an overall transparent, auditable and verifiable election;
 - * planned use of any proprietary or third party software and/or hardware such as scanning devices, computer equipment; and
 - * proposed utilization of mailing houses, printing establishments or any other third party vendor(s) – including specification of which, if any, are Union shops.

Budget

4. Set forth your detailed budget and fee proposal for the 2012 election, including discount(s), if any, that would be applicable to each budget line item in the case of a multi-year contract
5. Provide as much specificity as practical concerning cost differentials that may result from varying mix of paper versus electronic voting
6. Identify specific costs associated with your recommended outreach efforts to encourage, involve, and increase participation by members.
7. For each line item in the one-year budget, please identify potential cost savings, if any, that could be provided through utilization of Pacifica volunteers.
8. Identify specific costs, if any, associated with proposed use of software, hardware, mailing houses, printing establishments or any/or other third party vendor.

Proposal Outline - Continued

Information about Staff and your Firm

9. Provide biographical data for all personnel who will be assigned to this project.
10. Summarize your company's experience providing election services to not-for-profit entities, especially of size and complexity similar to those of Pacifica.
11. Detail your company's experience providing services involving Proportional Representation voting systems, in general, and Single Transferable Vote method in particular.
12. Identify your 5 largest clients and provide client contact information for references.
13. If affiliated with any public or private election oversight or advocacy associations, please provide information describing the nature and time duration of such affiliation.
14. With regard to any member of your organization, disclose any affiliation or potential conflict of interest with former or current Pacifica Foundation members of the Board of Directors, employees, contractors, or consultants, and any other potential conflict of interest.
15. With regard to any member of your organization, indicate any complaints against them by any governmental or licensing authority; and indicate any corrective actions that have been taken by the company with respect to these persons.

Pacifica 2012 Delegate Election Management Services

Details of Services Required **NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTION SUPERVISORS**

Designate a National Election Supervisor ("NES") who shall

1. Report to the Foundation Executive Director and oversee all aspects of the elections and certify the fairness of all ten elections and confirm said elections' compliance with the Pacifica Bylaws; and shall
2. Appoint, supervise and pay a Local Election Supervisor ("LES") for each of the five stations who shall provide on-site management of nominations and campaigning, including:
 - a) Promote the elections and election time-frame to members; and answer questions about the roles and responsibilities of local station board members
 - b) Verify and certify eligibility of candidates in each of the two station elections (Listener-members and Staff-members)
 - c) Assemble statements and other required materials from all verified candidates
 - d) Work with local station personnel and members to organize and implement candidate forums both for live broadcast and in-person community events
 - e) Monitor and enforce fair campaign provisions, including processing complaints of violations.
3. Prepare and maintain a centralized election website with information on election processes and events and with detailed pages for each of the 5 stations with candidates information, etc. This site should be made public no later than the beginning of the nomination period and may require daily update.

Discussion

Due to a very short time period between close of nominations and mailing of ballots and candidate information, attention to advance preparations is critical.

The NES and LES's must be very familiar with all portions of the Pacifica Bylaws pertaining to the election of delegates. Allegations of campaign violations by participants in the election (including on-air hosts of programs on our stations) must be addressed promptly and professionally, without prejudice or appearance of prejudice.

There will be cases where the Bylaws are silent. In these instances it is essential that all supervisors stay impartial and avoid any appearance of taking sides. Questions and challenges have occurred in past elections if a candidate or candidate's supporters feel the NES or LES's are not being fair or competent, and/or is not following the Bylaws. **Failure to ensure complete fairness and impartiality in accordance with the bylaws will result in exponentially increased workload on the NES and LES's.**

Pacifica 2012 Delegate Election Management Services

Details of Services Required **BALLOTING AND TABULATION**

All elections are by single transferable vote (STV). Tabulation software must be capable of handling STV ballots involving up to 50 candidates. To date, all Pacifica elections have used Choice Plus Pro ("CP Pro") as the tally software [available for download with documentation, without charge, from www.votingsolutions.com] Proposals that involve alternative software will be considered if such software is capable of producing the same results as CP Pro.

The entire system must be transparent, auditable and verifiable.

Tasks

- (1) Assist General Managers and development staff at each station as needed to ensure that voter lists are clean and de-duped, and that staff addresses are not among listener-member addresses, etc.
- (2) Prepare and maintain detailed election webpages for all 5 stations.
- (3) Generate confidential random Voter ID numbers within ten distinct, non-overlapping pools of alpha-numeric identifiers.
- (4) Maintain system of constantly-updated database of ID numbers to identify eligible voters for each election who have not previously voted in the current election
- (5) Design (subject to Foundation review), print, and mail candidate statement pamphlets, simple voting instructions, paper ballots, including a fundraising appeal.
- (6) E-Balloting Option - Devise and post optional web-based interactive voting pages that members can access, using their valid ID numbers, to cast their votes electronically in one of the ten (10) distinct elections and have the ability to print a copy of their completed ballot.
- (7) Mail replacement ballots (approximately 5% of original mailing) as necessary.
- (8) Prevent ballot stuffing; verify valid ballots.
- (9) Verify that quorum, as specified in Article 3 Section 7, has been achieved in each election by the appropriate deadline(s)
- (10) Scan validated paper ballots, converting each into a ballot image file (usually a .tif file) and converting each image file into the form required by tally program. If using a tally program other than CP Pro and ballot file format cannot be tallied by CP Pro: create and provide to Pacifica, equivalent (.blt) text files in CP Pro format, separately grouped for the ten elections that will be tallied, with distinct and clearly identified filenames to facilitate spot checks and for quality control verification.

Balloting & Tabulation Services – Continued

- (11) E-Balloting Option - Convert each accepted e-ballot to a line in a text ballot file for input into tally program as above. **The ability to integrate paper and electronic ballots must be clearly demonstrated prior to bid acceptance, or by a date-certain.**
- (12) Prepare, with observers, accurate verifiable tallies for each of the ten STV elections
- (13) Certify the election results
- (14) Publish election results on webpages and via email to Pacifica and local station management, Pacifica National Board and Local Station Board(s).
- (15) Copy ballot files to appropriate folders to be referenced individually by filename in the tally software configuration file (e.g. CP Pro's .in file).
- (16) Distribute CD-R disks with images, derived ballot and configuration (.in) files, and round-by-round results to the five LES's, General Managers, and chairs of the Local Station Boards, and others upon request.

**Pacifica Foundation
2012 Delegate Elections Timeline**

Feb 28target date to complete first cleaning of membership rosters

Mar 1target date to hire NES

Mar 1 – May 30 ...Promote upcoming elections

- * Remind listeners of date of record; Air PSAs informing listeners of opportunity to run and soliciting candidates; Notify staff of same
- * Fund drives during this period should include carts promoting upcoming election

Jun 15 or Jun 30 Date of Record for voters - to be determined by NES

Between Date of Record and Aug. 15 – Final Clean of Voter Lists - Make address corrections and updates as needed including ***validate contact information on all staff members, paid and unpaid.

Jun 1- 30Nominating Period

Fund drives from June 1 open nominations through Sept 30 deadline for receipt of ballots
This time frame has the greatest likelihood for conflict between fundraising and campaigning.

Jun 30.....**Nominations Close** - stations typically open for nomination petition signing

Jul 1validate nominations at all stations for both classes of membership.

Jul 1 – Sep 30.....Campaign Period

- * Air candidate forums, hold in-person town halls,
- * Air PSAs promoting elections and reminding listeners of timeline.

Aug 15**Ballots to be mailed**

- * Must have procedures in place for handling appeals, non-receipt of ballots
- * PSAs, on-air and in-person forums continue.

Sep 30.....**Deadline for receipt of ballots**

Oct 1-28 Window for possible extended Ballot Return Deadline if Quorum not met
- to be determined by NES

Oct 15 (or 15 days after extended Ballot Return Date Deadline) **Deadline to complete ballot count and Certify Election Results**

Upon Completion of Election Certification: final reports are due from NES & LES's