

# Request for Proposals/Quotes

For “Government Relations and Lobbying”

January 24, 2023

Cowlitz Indian Tribe  
1055 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Ste B.  
Longview, WA 98632

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Please respond to [legal@cowlitz.org](mailto:legal@cowlitz.org) with any questions or concerns.

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## Submission Details

### Submission Deadlines

All submissions for responding to this request must be submitted on paper and delivered to our office, as stated below, no later than:

**February 22, 2023**  
**No later than 5:00pm PST**

## Submission Delivery Address

The delivery address to be used for all submissions is:

**Attn: Tiffini Johnson**

Cowlitz Indian Tribe

1055 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Ste B.

Longview, WA 98632

Phone: (360) 577-8140 Ext. 2289

Email: [tjohnson@cowlitz.org](mailto:tjohnson@cowlitz.org)

## Submission Questions and Clarifications

You may contact the following person if you have any questions or require clarification on any topics covered in this Request for Proposal:

**Attn: Tiffini Johnson**

Cowlitz Indian Tribe

1055 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. Ste B.

Longview, WA 98632

Phone: (360) 577-8140 Ext. 2289

Email: [tjohnson@cowlitz.org](mailto:tjohnson@cowlitz.org)

## Electronic Submissions

Electronic submissions in response to this Request for Proposal will be accepted.

Sent via email to [tjohnson@cowlitz.org](mailto:tjohnson@cowlitz.org)

## Background

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe, a sovereign Indian Nation, governs a wide range of programs serving its enrolled members, other American Indians, and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs), and, in certain programs, members of the non-Native community. Services are provided from several sites along the I-5 corridor in Washington State.

The Tribe manages a growing portfolio of health and social services, elder care, education, scientific research, housing, transportation, economic development, conservation projects and legal issues. Along with the ilani Resort and a growing portfolio of business operations and economic development initiatives, the Tribe is a growing force in community building in what are now Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis and parts of King, Pierce, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties; a vast territory occupied by numerous Cowlitz settlements and usual and accustomed lands

prior to and following European colonization and the establishment of the United States and Washington and Oregon state governments.

## Scope of Work

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe (CIT) is seeking proposals from qualified entities to build and implement a full-scope and integrated government relations and lobbying program in support of CIT and its enterprises.

Through intentional planning and economic development, the Cowlitz Indian Tribe plays a key role in the economy of the Pacific Northwest. CIT maintains a diverse and growing portfolio dedicated to serving tribal member's needs as well as those of other American Indians and Alaska Natives and associated communities as promote the best interests of CIT.

The purpose of this RFP is to establish an ongoing relationship with a qualified entity or entities to provide responsive counsel and develop strategic efforts that advance CIT's agenda. To ensure that all aspects of CIT's public affairs and government relations needs are accounted for, the nature of this scope of work is broad. Elements should include:

- Federal Government Relations
  - Partisan, branch, legislative chamber, or other service focus segmentation invited (i.e., identify sub-components of services/fees you are willing to provide)
- Community and Stakeholder Relations
  - This is viewed as a subsidiary and included coordinated function regardless of substantive federal or state focused services to maximize multi-team coordination across issues and levels of government
- State Government Relations
  - Oregon state focused services invited at this time
    - Primarily focused gaming policy and related executive and legislative issues.

## Federal Government Relations

The selected entity or entities shall provide federal relations consulting services through frequent consultations with CIT and interactions on behalf of CIT with federal legislative and executive branches of government, as well as national and regional coalition engagement as necessary to advance interests.

These duties shall include, but are not limited to:

- Provide strategic recommendations and activities to support the development and advancement of CIT's federal affairs strategy
- Assist in the development and implementation of short and long-term federal funding strategies for priority projects.
- Assist CIT in engagement and communications with a variety of federal audiences to promote the Tribe's federal agenda and leverage the tribe's success to audiences including:
  - Washington and Oregon Congressional delegations
  - Congressional committees of relevant jurisdiction
  - Relevant executive department personnel
  - Representatives of other agencies, governments, and associations that share common interests
- Communicate regularly with CIT leadership on federal activities and trends that have a bearing on the Tribe's federal agenda, including regular conference calls and written reports, and periodic strategy meetings

## State Government Relations

CIT is seeking a partner with proven experience providing state government relations and lobbying services focused on the State of Oregon. The selected responded will demonstrate the ability to advance CIT's interests before the Washington (if/as needed in coordination with Washington team members) and Oregon (primary focus of responsibilities and services) Legislatures, as well as both state's governmental bodies and administrations with great emphasis on Oregon gaming issues. The Tribe desires to enter a professional services contract with an entity or entities that can demonstrate competency and experience in providing such services, while supporting and integrating with CIT's existing teams and resources.

In carrying out these services, the entity or entities will assist CIT with representation, information gathering, information dissemination, strategic

advice, and support services. The Entity or entities will provide a flexible level of support, depending on the depth or scope of the Tribe's legislative or broad government facing priorities at any given time. Responding entities will also account for corresponding community and stakeholder engagement strategies as detailed below.

The general scope of work consists of the Entity or entities performing the following services:

- Provide a broad range of State lobbying services on behalf of CIT before the Washington, if/as needed, and Oregon, primary focus, Legislatures, state branches of government, and working groups/taskforces.
- Assist in the formulation of a Tribal policy agendas, working with Tribal leadership, key executives, and CIT department heads.
- Represent CIT's interest on issues related to gaming, but with associated focus on education, housing, healthcare, culture, natural resources, and economic development, among other potential priorities.
- Identify issues that may impact the Tribe in both Washington and Oregon and provide prompt notification and strategic advice.
- Based on policy direction provided by CIT leadership, develop, and implement strategies to advance the Tribe's legislative goals.
- Provide real-time communications to inform CIT of developments that are impactful to CIT; be available in a timely manner in person, by telephone, email.
- Represent CIT as needed, at Task Force/Work Group meetings, bill hearings, Committee meetings, and provide timely updates.
- Provide timely reports that track work status and progress.
- Work with CIT leadership and staff to prepare communications if/as needed for both tribal council and general council updates.

### **Community and Stakeholder Relations**

Qualifying responses will include a recognition and expectation that the services provided will involve coordination and planning for supporting and advancing community and stakeholder relations in overall support of CIT's public, government, community, and media affairs agenda, including its federal and state government affairs as well as strategic communications efforts. This includes:

- Developing and maintaining or supporting CIT relationships with local elected officials

- Identifying key stakeholders with shared interests and influence
- Organizing and activating third-party validation in support of CIT priorities
- Developing strategic coalitions in support and advancement of CIT local, state, and federal policy agendas

### **Information Sharing and Confidentiality Agreement**

Upon execution of non-disclosure and confidentiality agreements the consultant will receive information supporting the scope of work

- All information gathered by the consultant will be securely held and all precautions will be taken by the consultant to ensure confidentiality of all collected materials. All reporting will be to the Tribal leadership, key executives, and CIT department heads or to its designated staff. There will be no reporting outside these parameters.

### **Terms and Conditions**

The consulting entity or entities selected will engage services as soon as practicably able, but in no case more than 30 days of award. Ongoing progress reports will be provided to the appropriate project manager or their designate; a quarterly (or more frequent as events dictate) report summary of work performed together with any recommendations on modification to the scope of work will be provided to the appropriate project manager or their designate.

Invoices for services will be presented monthly and will be paid on a net 30-day basis.

### **Selection Criteria**

The Cowlitz Indian Tribe will select a consultant based on the following criteria:

- Experience working with small to mid-sized governments.
- Experience working in Indian Country.
- Demonstrated experience and success in providing public affairs, government affairs and community engagement services to tribal nations.

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- Active presence in Washington, Oregon, and Washington D.C. as applicable with proven experience in relevant service areas
- Ability to meet specified requirements
- In-house service offerings and bandwidth to respond to real-time needs and developments
- Disclosure of all necessary sub-contractors, including sub-contractor's experience working with Tribes
- Clarity of the proposal
- Pricing and costs associated with the proposal submitted.
- References provided by the consultant from prior clients on similar projects.

CIT staff may contact vendors with questions regarding the contents of proposals and to ask for clarifications during the evaluation process.