

Call for Tender

Public Relations Partner for the Crop Trust

1. BACKGROUND

The Crop Trust is the only international, non-profit organization whose sole mission is to support crop conservation in genebanks. This includes national, regional and international genebanks, and the world's backup facility, the iconic Svalbard Global Seed Vault.

The Crop Trust's *raison d'être* is its endowment fund – paid into by public and private sector donors. This generates investment income which is used to finance crop conservation activities around the world. We estimate that an endowment fund worth approximately US\$850 million would generate enough income for us to support all of the world's most important crop genebanks - forever.

The period from now to the end of 2020 will be an important time for the organization. New projects will be launched, milestones will be reached, and we will move closer to the deadline for a key United Nations target very close the Crop Trust's mission. Sustainable Development Goal Target 2.5 – part of the UN's goal of achieving Zero Hunger by 2030 – will complete in 2020. The target reflects international commitments to conserving agricultural biodiversity. The Crop Trust, with its focus on a subset of this (crop diversity), has a lot to show in terms of its work to support efforts to reach the target.

The Crop Trust recognises the vital importance of strong communications to help raise awareness of its work and build its reputation as a unique source of funding and expertise in the world of crop conservation. But with limited internal capacity to manage public relations activities, the Crop Trust is seeking a PR partner.

The Crop Trust is aware that it operates in a niche that can be more complicated to communicate than saving pandas or orangutans. Nevertheless, crop diversity and crop conservation are essential to helping solve some of the biggest challenges of our time: ensuring there is enough affordable, nutritious food for a world population expected to reach almost 10 billion people by 2050, in spite of challenges such as climate change and land degradation.

But the connection between these issues and crop conservation takes time to understand and unpack, the terrain is often politically sensitive, and audience attention spans are at an all-time low. For these and other reasons, in our search for a retained public relations partner, we would encourage proposals from those already familiar with our work, or with a proven track record of working with clients in the sustainable development or biodiversity conservation sectors.

The fact there is already close to US\$300 million in the Crop Trust endowment fund is evidence that many have already found the case compelling enough to make substantial contributions to our mission. With this call for a retained PR partner, we want to strengthen the role of communications in moving closer to achieving our target.



2. OBJECTIVE

The Crop Trust would like to request proposals for a **retained PR partner** with proven expertise across the spectrum of PR activities, for the period of 10th April 2019 –10th June 2020.

3. SCOPE OF WORK

We anticipate a range of activities, some of which will be defined in collaboration with the PR partner, but which will include:

- a. **Media outreach** to secure coverage of news stories and targeted op-eds in **high-level media only**. (May 2019 – June 2020).
- b. Development of an updated Crop Trust **PR plan for hypothetical crisis situations** – procedures, policies, position statements and messaging for various situations (April/May 2019), and live support in the event of an actual crisis situation (ongoing).
- c. A **planning workshop** at the Crop Trust headquarters in Bonn, Germany. Maximum two days. (late April 2019) to determine some of the specific activities undertaken as part of this contract.
- d. Ad-hoc requests.
- e. Measuring impact.

a. Media outreach & op-ed development

The Crop Trust's top priority – and therefore the top priority for our PR partner – is positive coverage of the organization's work in high-level media outlets only. This will ultimately be the measure of success of the PR partner. For that reason, potential PR partners responding to this tender should ensure they have close, effective contacts with journalists at high-level outlets. We anticipate some key news opportunities over the contract period, relating to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, new projects, the results of projects that are finishing, and others.

The Crop Trust has much to offer in terms of unique expertise on a range of topics affecting our food systems. This provides many opportunities for proactive and reactive op-eds. With support from the Crop Trust, the PR partner would develop compelling op-eds and pitch them to the media. Proactive op-eds could be in relation to key UN International Days or international events that can be connected to the Crop Trust mission; reactive ones could be in relation to news coverage of new scientific studies that would benefit from an additional angle or a credible, dissenting voice. Once again, the top priority for op-ed placement is high-level media outlets only. We anticipate a two key news campaigns over the duration of the contract, and up to 5 op-ed opportunities.

b. PR plan for hypothetical crisis situations

A review and update of PR risks, institutional crisis management procedures and messages, including "speed dial" live support to manage, mitigate and minimize reputational risk in the event of a crisis situation. Preparing clear, cohesive messages, policies and speakers to reassure audiences in a prompt and consistent manner will be essential, along with other crisis management options, which can be discussed.

c. Planning workshop

Planning the above work will require a workshop at the outset of the contract, at the Crop Trust's headquarters in Bonn, Germany. This would be to familiarize the PR partner with the work of the Crop Trust, to meet the teams, discuss strategic priorities, assign focal points, initial development of messages,



and agree the PR timetable for the duration of the contract. We would expect the PR partner to be represented by two of its staff.

d. Ad-hoc requests

Could relate to specific requests for advice on certain issues, or the provision of support in the event of a crisis situation.

e. Measuring impact

The PR partner should draw up and implement a plan to monitor and measure the impact of their work. For specific campaigns, we ask that the PR partner produces a campaign-specific report showing impact/reach. The PR partner should produce a summary report showing for all activities undertaken as part of the contract, to coincide with the end date of the contract.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES, SAMPLE TIMELINE AND WORKPLAN

We ask for an offer for a retainer contract based on the following activities (including project management costs) on a daily rate basis for named team members who would be assigned to this contract. Please also include hourly rates for each activity as well as non-working hour costs (for emergencies).

We have budgeted up to US\$60,000 to implement activities through this contract. During the contract, each task will require a cost and time estimate for approval by the Crop Trust prior to beginning the work.

Sample timeline: Please find below a likely timetable of activities.

April 2019	Contract begins
	Planning workshop in Bonn, Germany (end of month)
May 2019	Initial planning for news campaign #1 First draft of crisis communications plan by end of the month Development of pro-active op-ed #1
	Execution of news campaign #1 Initial planning for news campaign #2 (runs to Feb 2020) Finalize crisis communications plan
Sep-Dec 2019	Development of proactive op-eds #2 and #3
Feb 2020	News campaign # 2 completes with major outreach efforts
Mar-Jun 2020	Development of pro-active op-ed #4 and possibly #5
June 2020	Completion of PR contract, submission of final report.

Workplan

Activity	Daily rate	Hourly rate	Max. project spend/hours	Notes
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Planning workshop, Bonn, Germany				Max spend = US\$5K including travel and accommodation
Crisis communications plan				
Crisis communications live support (upon request)				
News Campaign 1 – publication of key report				
News Campaign 2 - Svalbard seed deposits				
Op-ed (approx. 750 words)				
TOTAL			US\$60,000	

Contract Length: 15 months from start of contract (proposed start date is 10th April 2019).

Maximum Budget: US\$60,000

At the end of the contract period, there will be the option to renew for an additional twelve (12) months, under the same conditions, and subject to the availability of funds.

****VAT Status: Please clearly state whether you can accept the Crop Trust's VAT status; otherwise it will be assumed your offer includes VAT.**

For the duration of the contract each task will require a cost and time estimate for approval by the Crop Trust communications team prior to work commencing. Any travel, equipment or materials needed to fulfill this contract should be reviewed and approved by the Crop Trust team prior to implementation.

5. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested applicants are requested to submit any additional questions latest by on 6th March 2019 at 12:00 CET and ONLY to: procurement@croptrust.org. We will answer those questions latest by 12th March 2019 23:59 CET.

Applicants will have to submit their proposals to the Crop Trust no later than 23:59 CET on 18th March 2019 to: procurement@croptrust.org.

**** Please note, any applicants that send any proposals/questions relating to this tender to any other email address than procurement@croptrust.org, even if it is only in Cc or Bcc, will be automatically excluded from the tender process!**

Proposals will be opened at the Crop Trust premises on 19th March 2019 at 10:00 CET with one representative each from the Procurement and Communications teams, plus the Director of Finance.

Proposal submissions are to include:



1. Proposal detailing the supplier's intended approach. Please indicate which types of services can be provided in-house and which are typically contracted out and to whom.
2. Breakdown of costs of activities on hourly and daily basis.
3. Portfolio with examples of supplier's work, pertinent to the requested services, preferably including examples of firm's clients in the sustainable development and/or biodiversity conservation. Please include examples of news stories and op-eds that have been successfully placed in high-level media outlets in the past year.
4. History and mission of supplier and Curriculum Vitae of consultant(s) and for each member of the team (if a team approach is utilized, the names and biographies of those who would be responsible for working with the Crop Trust is sufficient).
5. An explanation of normal procedure for retainer clients - how requests for work are made, how much notice is required for new tasks, is there an additional charge for emergency/urgent work etc.
6. References and testimonials, including any awards and achievements.
7. Your copyright policy.
8. Signed Supplier self-assessment (Annex 1).
9. Signed Declaration of undertaking (Annex 2).

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals from potential PR partners that are available in accordance with the suggested timeline will be evaluated on the basis of:

Cost effectiveness / price	25%
Technical capabilities & variety of services	25%
Experience of firm and previous successes in a relevant sector	25%
Having close, established contacts at major news outlets	25%
