MassHire Metro North Workforce Board Request for Quotes

Graphic Designer for Annual Report

1. Introduction

MassHire Metro North Workforce Board (MNWB) is issuing the following Request for Quotes (RFQ) to identify a qualified Graphic Designer to support the design of its annual report. The selected Graphic Designer will serve as a visual communicator and partner to help MNWB transform its collection of strategic plan updates, stories, and financial statements into a compelling report that demonstrates impact and supports stakeholder engagement. Respondents should describe their relevant experience, proposed approach, staffing, and examples of comparable work.

This open RFQ will determine a Graphic Designer that MNWB will contract with from January 1, 2027 – February 26, 2027.

Applications are due by December 1, 2026.

2. Background,

MNWB is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that serves as the Workforce Development Board for the Metro North region of Massachusetts. As one of sixteen local Workforce Development Boards established in Massachusetts by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014, MNWB was formed to set local workforce policy, determine how state and federal funds are best used for workforce development, align the needs of employers to the needs of area residents, leverage partnerships to meet the region's workforce needs, and oversee the MassHire Metro North Career Centers (MNCC) where both job search and employer services are provided.

MNWB is developing its first ever annual report to highlight our FY26 work and accomplishments. Our goal of the report is to convey our mission and values, show progress of our strategic plan by highlighting and showing impact of our work from FY26, to show gratitude from funders and partners, and to provide financial transparency. The audience for this report will be funders, legislators, municipalities, and our partners.

The anticipated time for publishing the report is mid-late January 2027.

3. Scope of Work

Max Budget: $4,000

MNWB is looking to hire a Graphic Designer to assist with the layout/format/design of the FY26 Annual Report (approximately 12-15 pages), both online and in print, to make it attractive, user-friendly, and informative. The design will have text, graphics, and photos, and will be done in accordance with the branding guidance set for MassHire Workforce Boards.

Specific responsibilities of the graphic designer will include:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure all report contents and design elements are accessible to individuals with disabilities and compliant with applicable federal accessibility requirements. Deliverables must include an accessible PDF with properly structured headings, reading order, alternative text for images, sufficient color contrast, accessible tables, and other features necessary to support users of assistive technologies.
- **Page layout and visual hierarchy:** Develop a cohesive cover and interior layout with consistent typography, headings, spacing, and navigation that make report sections and key findings easy to locate.
- **Data visualization:** Translate MNWB-provided information into clear charts and infographics, verify that labels and values match the supplied data, and obtain MNWB approval of the visualized information.
- **Photo preparation:** Utilize and recommend photographs from MWNB's photo repository. Crop and prepare selected images for print and digital use, and flag resolution, permission, or credit requirements before final production.
- **Proofing and quality assurance:** Check page numbering, text flow, captions, image placement, and hyperlink functionality; correct design and production errors before submitting final files for MNWB approval.
- **Final Deliverable:** A printer-ready PDF and digital PDF for online use.

4. Preferred Qualifications

Applicants should demonstrate the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience designing annual reports, impact reports, or similar publications for nonprofit, governmental, or mission-driven organizations.

- Experience translating data into clear, engaging charts, infographics, and other data visualizations.
- Demonstrated knowledge of accessibility standards for digital and print publications, including accessible PDF creation and familiarity with WCAG and Section 508 requirements.
- Experience working within established brand guidelines and developing visually compelling designs that maintain organizational identity.
- Strong project management and communication skills, including the ability to meet deadlines and incorporate stakeholder feedback through revisions.
- Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop) or equivalent professional design software.
- Experience preparing files for both professional printing and digital distribution.

5. Proposal Response Requirements

Proposals must include the following components:

- **Must be based in the United States.**
- **Graphic Designer Information:** Provide the organization name, organization address, website link (if applicable), primary contact's name, title, email address, and telephone number.
- **Budget:** Provide proposed budget for scope of work.
- **Qualifications:** Describe the organization, years in business, overall graphic design experience, and highlight any experience serving nonprofit, public-sector, workforce-development, or other mission-driven organizations. Additionally, state experience with creating accessible print and digital reports.
- **Comparable Work:** Provide at least three examples of annual reports, impact reports, or similar publications completed within the last five years. At least one example should demonstrate experience creating an accessible digital publication. Include a brief project description, client name (if permitted), scope of work, and a link or PDF sample.
- **Schedule:** Provide proposed schedule and anticipated timeline.

6. Submission Instructions

- Please submit your response based on the following format guidelines: 8.5 x 11 letter size paper, numbered pages, one-inch margins, single-spaced, and minimum 11-point font.
- Max of 5 pages, not including budgets or comparable work examples.
- Applications are due by December 1, 2026.
- All proposals should be sent in a single document in a PDF format via email to rfp@masshiremetronorth.org
- Questions may be directed to rfp@masshiremetronorth.org with the subject line: "RFQ Graphic Designer"

7. Evaluation Criteria/Review Process

Proposals that do not meet minimum standards will be considered non-responsive. This RFQ does not commit MNWB to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal. All materials submitted become the property of MNWB and are subject to Massachusetts public records law.

All proposals will be scored according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. Additional information may be considered by reviewers when scoring proposals such as interviews and questions and answers after submission of the written proposal.

MNWB is not required to contract with the entity receiving the highest score as a result of the proposal review process, as more particularly described below.

Criteria Point Value

- Relevant experience and qualifications: 25 points
- Accessibility expertise: 20 points
- Portfolio and design quality: 25 points
- Project approach and timeline: 10 points
- Cost and overall value: 20 points

Total points available: 100 points

After the review committee scores your written proposal, they may reach out to you to follow up with any additional questions about your application and experience.

Applicants will be notified of final decision by December 18, 2026.

8. Contract and Payment Structure

Graphic Designer will be paid a one-time payment when the work is complete.

9. Conflict of Interest

Applicants must disclose any real or potential conflicts of interest. Individuals with a financial or personal interest in the RFQ review or selection process may not participate in this procurement.

10. Guidance of AI Use

AI tools are becoming more common, and we understand that that RFQ respondents may use them when preparing their quote. As a workforce development organization, we're investing in digital skills, including AI and data, because we know how important these technologies are for the future. However, when you submit a RFQ proposal, it's important that it is your own. While AI can be useful for things like checking spelling, grammar, or helping to structure your answers, relying on it too much, especially to write your answers, could reduce your chances of being considered.