



States United Democracy Center/States United Action  
Request for Proposal  
Crisis and Rapid Response Communications Consultancy  
Submissions Due: October 3, 2022

Please email submissions to [info@statesuniteddemocracy.org](mailto:info@statesuniteddemocracy.org).

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## Background on the States United Democracy Center/States United Action

[States United](#) is a nonpartisan organization that advances free, fair, and secure elections by supporting state and local officials, law enforcement leaders, and pro-democracy partners. Our work is guided and informed by our [Bipartisan Advisory Board](#), which brings together former state and federal officials from both parties who are committed to protecting our democracy.

In the wake of the 2020 election, anti-democratic forces in this country have doubled down—and so have we. We continue to protect and strengthen our democracy by filling a critical gap: supporting the states, which run our elections. Efforts to sabotage our democratic institutions and disenfranchise Americans will continue. We must be fully prepared to meet those challenges.

States United focuses on four main areas:

- (1) Helping state leaders and partners protect elections
- (2) Working with law enforcement to prevent political violence
- (3) Holding democracy violators accountable
- (4) Advancing truth in elections

Some of our most recent work includes:

- Tracking the nationwide trend of partisan state legislatures trying to take control over election administration away from trusted, expert election officials. The series of reports, [Democracy Crisis in the Making](#), analyzes efforts to politicize, criminalize, and interfere with nonpartisan election administration.
- Through [Replacing the Refs](#), a project of States United Action, we track Election Deniers running for **governor**, **secretary of state**, and **attorney general** in the 2022 midterms. Election Deniers are seeking these statewide offices that oversee elections, running on a platform of lies and conspiracy theories. We have been following these contests throughout the midterm cycle.
- Ahead of midterms this fall, when 39 states and the District of Columbia will choose their next governor, attorney general, and/or secretary of state, States United Democracy Center launched an [initiative](#) to inform voters about the powers these officials have over elections, including videos and social media.

## Crisis Communications and Rapid Response Support

Through this request for proposals, the States United Democracy Center/States United Action is seeking crisis and rapid response communications support through the midterms and into Quarter 1 of 2023. We are looking for an experienced consultant(s) or firm to quickly integrate with our team and provide assistance to our communications team, CEO and Executive team on communications and media rapid response. Successful bidders will work closely with the States United staff and outside consultants to advance our strategic communications and messaging efforts.

We seek a partner who can help us respond to election-related developments – including election results, threats to elected officials and election workers, and disinformation trends – to further States United’s mission and amplify the importance of the states in the fight to protect our democracy. We are looking for a consultant(s) or firm with a “can do” attitude, flexibility, and a commitment to learning the organization, our issues, and helping be a force multiplier for our small, ambitious team.

### Core Responsibilities

- Provide strategic guidance and oversee the development and distribution of communications materials and messaging for States United’s leadership, Advisory Board, and key stakeholders around the November 2022 midterms.
- Guide crisis communications for States United and key allies and serve as the go-to expert/advisor for rapid-response situations, including:
  - Supporting the execution of States United’s rapid response protocol, recommending adjustments as needed, and providing guidance to state-based communications teams and project leads in rapid response situations;
  - Being available for early morning/late night breaking news situations, including conversations with States United’s Leadership and key allies;
  - Facilitating awareness and understanding of latest communications developments/recommendations;
  - Ensuring cross-team collaboration on messaging, external communications products, and strategies; and
  - Coordinating with Deputy Communications Director on team priorities and gaps and providing recommendations and support to fill those gaps.
- Serve as an expert/advisor to other organizational leaders, Advisory Board members, key stakeholders, and staff.

The consultant or team for States United will be able to demonstrate:

- Experience in and passion for democracy and equity-based work (required)
- Experience working in/around the states (including an understanding of the state media landscape, state government dynamics, and state campaigns)
- Principal management (background working with high-profile leaders)
- Experience managing/working with outside consultants
- Background in crisis communications and rapid response, including an understanding of digital media

- Demonstrated success in securing high-level, high-impact media placements that drive conversation and engage influencers and thought leaders
- Solid knowledge of the voting rights and state legislative landscape
- Willingness to deliver high-level strategic direction, as well as ongoing support with execution
- Success in engaging national, regional, and state media
- Strength in message development
- Success in collaborating across stakeholders and with bipartisan voices
- Flexible schedule and comfort with a start-up mentality

The States United Democracy Center partner(s) can be located anywhere in the United States.

## **Process**

Please provide responses that meet the following guidelines. Limit memos to no more than five pages and limit decks to no more than 10 slides (+ case studies and team addendum).

**Submissions are due by October 3, 2022; priority will be given to submissions received by September 30, 2022. Email submissions to [info@statesuniteddemocracy.org](mailto:info@statesuniteddemocracy.org).**

Please include:

- Experience providing crisis communications support on national or state issues
- Experience with and approach to rapid response communications, message development, and media relations strategy
- Approach to project management and how you would staff the project
- The point person or team members to be assigned, their backgrounds and expertise, and their hours available for this project
- 1-2 case studies relevant to the work
- A monthly budget estimate and specifics on what it covers, including approximate number of hours available per week (We expect to need a minimum of 25 hours per week)
- What makes you the best fit for the States United?

The initial rapid response communications contract will run through the first quarter of 2023, with the possibility of renewal based on the strength and initial success of the relationship. We envision a monthly retainer model and ask bidders to include an estimate of costs in their proposal. The estimated start date of this contract is **as soon as possible**.