



States United Democracy Center/States United Action
Request for Proposal: Digital Support and Graphic Design
Submissions Due: May 22, 2023

Background:

[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](#).

Project Overview:

Through this request for proposals, the States United Democracy Center/States United Action is seeking digital/brand support in 3 main categories:

- Ongoing graphic design
- Branding and template creation



- Microsite design and development

We are looking for an experienced and nimble consultant(s) or firm to quickly integrate with our team and provide a *breadth of digital and brand support*.

We seek a partner who can help us respond to the rapid moving election-related ecosystem—including, 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

- Serve as a design expert/advisor to our communication and digital staff.
- Design and develop creative digital assets to help propel the mission of States United, including but not limited to:
 - Static graphics for social and web
 - Gifs
 - Social media templates
 - Internal design templates (letterheads, PowerPoints, etc.)
 - Designed reports and documents
- Design, execute, and evaluate Microsites that accompany project releases, advertising campaign landing pages, etc.
 - Experience with WordPress
 - Experience developing advertising landing pages

The consultant will be able to demonstrate:

- Passion for democracy and equity-based work (required)
- Experience designing for diverse audiences; and experience designing to appeal to moderate/conservative audiences
- High level understanding of design/digital trends in the non-profit political advocacy space (including an understanding of social media trends, power of gifs and meme, and website user-experience)
- Flexible schedule and comfort with a start-up mentality

Budget:

We ask respondents to include their rates and availability in their responses.

We envision a 6-month contract (with a possibility of renewal), paid at an hourly rate (plus expenses) with a monthly cap on hours. We will work with the designer to establish a volume and cadence of work that meets our needs and accounts for how their weekly/monthly availability may change over the course of the contract.

Please include the cost of assets like photographs and illustrations in your cost estimate.



Project Timeline and Process:

- **RFP submission: Open until Monday May 22, 2023, at 5:00 pm (ET)**
- Proposal review: May 22 – May 26
- Interviews: May 29 – June 2
- Selection/Notification: June 9
- Project start: June 2023

The selected consultant/agency will primarily work with the States United's Senior Digital Manager in executing the projects. Additionally, project dependent, the consultant will work closely with the Director of Communications, and Truth in Elections workstream lead.

The initial engagements will run for six months with the possibility of renewal based on the strength and initial success of the relationship. The estimated start date of this contract is June 2023.

Criteria for Selection:

To help us select the best partner for this major project, please make sure to include the following information in your proposal:

- Level of experience working with grass tops advocacy groups
- Design portfolio and/or 1-2 case studies relevant to the work
- Approach to project management and how you would staff the project
- A monthly budget estimate and specifics on what it covers, including approximate number of hours available
- Client references
- What makes you the best fit for the States United Democracy Center?

The States United partner(s) can be located anywhere in the U.S.

Format & Proposal Details:

Please submit your full proposals in PDF by May 22, 2023 to Zonya Dawson (Senior Digital Manager) zonya@statesuniteddemocracy.org.

States United's commitment to racial diversity, equity and inclusion is long term, on-going and strategic. We are doing and plan to keep doing more than just "checking the boxes". We aim to ensure that the new website and the process of the redesign reflect these values. We encourage firms owned by Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+ and other underrepresented individuals to submit a proposal.

We will contact a shortlist of agencies for Zoom interviews. Please refer to the timeline for the full RFP review and selection timeline. For questions, please contact Zonya Dawson, Senior Digital Manager at zonya@statesuniteddemocracy.org.