



September 15, 2025

NOTICE FOR REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS

REBRANDING

ECIA will receive such proposals via email addressed to:

Mae Hingtgen, Executive Director

mhingtgen@ecia.org

carbon copy Marla Quinn, Grants and Municipal Coordinator, mquinn@ecia.org

Subject line: ECIA Rebranding – RFP 2025

This Request for Proposal (RFP) contains the instructions governing the proposals to be submitted and the material to be included, mandatory requirements to be eligible for consideration, and other requirements that each proposal must meet.

Proposals shall be submitted via email in .pdf format that allows for printing in hard copy in 8½x11 booklet format.

PROPOSALS WILL BE RECEIVED UP TO THE HOUR OF 3:00 PM Central Time, October 17, 2025. Proposals must not exceed 25 MB.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the Respondent's company empowered with the right to bind the Respondent.

Copies of this RFP document are available from the ECIA website at: www.ecia.org or by contacting the Executive Director at mhingtgen@ecia.org.

ECIA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. ECIA reserves the right to disqualify incomplete proposals, waive minor defects as it deems applicable in the written proposals, request additional information from any respondent, change or modify the scope of the project at any time without penalty, negotiate terms with one or more of the respondents, reject any or all proposals without penalty, and take any steps necessary to act in ECIA's best interest.

Bids/proposals will not be considered for award if received after the official closing date and time.

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SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

East Central Intergovernmental Association (ECIA) is an organization of counties, cities and other local governments serving a five-county area in eastern Iowa. ECIA's practice is to self-assess through strategic planning to ensure that its staffing and programming are meeting the needs of its constituents while sustaining a strong organization. Based in Dubuque, ECIA works to improve the viability, livability, and environment of the cities and counties, which ultimately benefits the people who live in the region. After 50+ years in business, ECIA is an evolving organization, continuously creating new programs and initiatives.

ECIA recently completed a strategic planning process which involved a select committee of ECIA and municipal staff, and partners, working with an outside consultant to determine priority areas expanded on in the final plan. This committee developed the following new Mission, Vision, and Values, approved by the ECIA Council July 1, 2025.

Mission:

ECIA proactively enhances the well-being of our region by forging strong county and community partnerships, developing innovative solutions, and delivering essential services.

Vision:

As a proactive and trusted partner in the region, ECIA is committed to enhancing professional services and equipping communities and counties with the tools and resources they need to succeed. ECIA has a strong, creative team of experts that delivers relevant, efficient, and impactful services and innovative solutions.

Values:

Collaboration: ECIA engages with colleagues and community partners, combining our strengths to achieve shared goals. Open communication and teamwork enable us to support one another and solve challenges more effectively, driving collective success.

Resiliency: ECIA demonstrates resiliency by adapting to challenges, uncertainty, and change with a forward-thinking mindset and approach that combines innovation and creativity to maintain steady progress even in the face of setbacks. Our team stays flexible and motivated, learning from obstacles to effectively adapt our strategies for new possibilities.

Expertise: ECIA approaches work with professionalism, deep knowledge, and specialized skills, ensuring that every decision is informed by experience and best practices. Our commitment to continuous learning and improvement allows us to deliver high-quality results with confidence and precision.

Respect: ECIA engages with others thoughtfully and listens with compassion and care, valuing diverse perspectives and experiences. By treating everyone with fairness and professionalism, we foster positive relationships.

Reliability: ECIA demonstrates reliability by consistently meeting deadlines, delivering high-quality work, and following through on our commitments. Our team maintains clear communication and proactively addresses challenges to ensure smooth and dependable outcomes.

Integrity: ECIA upholds integrity by consistently delivering on our promises and maintaining honesty and transparency in all our actions. Our commitment to ethical practices ensures that we build trust with our clients, partners, and colleagues.

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The strategic planning process confirmed the need for ECIA to rebrand based on the following feedback ascertained from strategic planning sessions and a survey that went to staff and member communities:

- Lack of knowledge about ECIA programs
- The need for additional ECIA exposure in the region
- Respondents not very aware of what ECIA does
- Articulating what ECIA does and addressing the complexities of that work
- Disconnect in what elected officials know about ECIA
- Brand/identity is worn & confusing

Because of this feedback, rebranding rose to the top of the strategic plan priorities.

The purpose of this project is to develop a new brand identity that embodies ECIA's mission, vision, and values, and takes into consideration the following strategic planning goal and outcome:

Priority Area: External Communication & Outreach

Goal: To ensure that ECIA and its programs are well-known throughout the region.

Possible Metrics:

- New name/brand by Spring of 2026
- 60% of survey respondents indicate awareness of ECIA mission and resources
- Number of community exposure opportunities increases by 50%

Outcome 1: ECIA's brand is updated to more clearly reflect the organization's work.

See Appendices A and B for existing logo arrays.

SECTION 3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Core Logo Development

Task 1. Discovery and Planning:

- a. Meet with ECIA to gather agency's input on brand positioning, brand narrative, topline key messages, and information about our programs and divisions to serve as a foundation for addressing scope of work.
- b. Onsite review of planned uses of the logo (e.g., interior lobby, exterior building).

Task 2. Research, Concept and Design Development:

- a. Create and present three (3) design concepts for new ECIA logo and taglines, with updated color palette, typography, and imagery.
- b. Collect initial feedback on design concepts, discuss any specific changes to keep or alter.
- c. Implement revisions.
- d. Present two (2) revised logos based on feedback, discuss any specific changes to keep or alter.
- e. Implement revisions.
- f. Final review session and one (1) round of minor revisions as needed.

Task 3. Approvals and Deliverables:

- a. Following approval of ECIA's core logo, prepare high resolution files for logos (PNG, JPEG, EPS, color, B/W, grayscale).
- b. Include the primary logo structure plus one alternative orientation (e.g., horizontal, and vertical or circular usage) for logos.
- c. Comprehensive brand style guide detailing logo usage, color palette, typography, scale, do's and don'ts and other guidelines as identified.

Task 4. Asset Development:

- a. Create Templates (provide InDesign files when appropriate):
 - i. New PPT template to include all master pages (e.g., Title Slide, Title and Content, Section Header, Two Content, Comparison, Content with Caption, Picture with Caption, Title Only, Blank, and others); provide at least two styles for internal and external use to help convey different types of information
 - ii. Stationery (i.e., Business Card, Letterhead, Envelope, E-signature)
 - iii. Mass E-mail Template (using Vertical Response)
 - iv. Social Media: Develop recommendations on updating social media profiles to reflect the new brand identity. Provide three to four sample templates for posting on social media (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn)
- b. Provide checklist and recommendations for brand roll out.

Affiliate Logo Development for ECIA's 13 affiliates

Task 1. Based on core logo development:

- a. Create and present two (2) design concepts for new affiliate logos and taglines, with updated color palette, typography, and imagery that compliments the new core logo.
- b. Collect initial feedback on design concepts, discuss any specific changes to keep or alter.
- c. Implement revisions.
- d. Final review session and one (1) round of minor revisions as needed.

Task 2. Approvals and Deliverables:

- a. Following approval of affiliate logos, prepare high resolution files for logos (PNG, JPEG, EPS, color, B/W, grayscale)
- b. Include the primary logo structure plus one alternative orientation (e.g., horizontal, and vertical or circular usage) for logos.
- c. Incorporate into main style guide detailing logo usage, color palette, typography, scale, do's and don'ts and other guidelines as identified.

Website Design & Development

Task 1. Discovery and Planning:

- a. Kickoff meeting: Discuss project goals, target audience, brand guidelines and existing content.
- b. User research: Conduct surveys, interviews, or user testing to understand user needs and behavior.
- c. Competitor analysis: Analyze websites of similar businesses to identify best practices and potential gaps.
- d. Content audit and strategy: Review existing content and develop a strategy for new content creation or optimization.
- e. Information Architecture (IA): Create a sitemap and user flow to ensure the site is easy to navigate and find information.
- f. Wireframing and prototyping: Develop low-fidelity wireframes and high-fidelity prototypes for client feedback.

Task 2. Design and Development:

- a. Visual design: Create three (3) mockups with branding, typography, color palettes, and imagery.
- b. Responsive development: After final design is chosen by Rebranding Committee, ensure the website adapts to different screen sizes and devices.
- c. Content Management System (CMS) implementation: Choose and implement a user-friendly CMS for client content management.
- d. Technical development: Implement required functionalities (including Section 508 Compliance), integrations, and forms.
- e. Quality assurance and testing: Thoroughly test the website for functionality and responsiveness across devices.

Task 3. Launch and Maintenance:

- a. Website launch: Upload the website to the chosen hosting platform and configure domain names and emails.
- b. Search Engine Optimization (SEO) optimization: Perform basic on-page optimization for relevant keywords and site structure.
- c. Maintenance and support: Allow for ECIA staff to provide ongoing support for troubleshooting, updates, and security.

SECTION 4: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS & SUBMISSION

ECIA reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to reject any and all proposals. Any contract awarded for services shall not become effective until approved by the ECIA Council.

Proposals should provide a straightforward and concise description of the Respondent's capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. It should explain the work to be performed, how the work will be accomplished, and the expected results. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content. Responses of excessive length are discouraged. To be considered, all proposals must contain the following information with an emphasis on adding value to ECIA. Proposals not addressing the following items may be considered non-responsive.

4.1 PROPOSAL FORMAT: Each proposal should be organized to clearly address the following requirements, as a minimum:

4.1.1 Availability, credentials, and related experience:

- a. List the full name, address, telephone number, and email address of the firm and if applicable, of the office from which the services are to be provided. Designate the person to serve as project manager and key staff that will be assigned to this project. Include specific information on the staff's experience with public sector rebranding initiatives.

Provide information on specific experiences that have resulted in successful outcomes in conducting rebranding projects and making presentations to public bodies. List the name or names of the persons in the firm authorized to negotiate the proposed contract associated with this RFP.

- b. Provide an overview of the firm's services and experience in performing rebranding initiatives. Promotional material should NOT be included.
- c. Explain in detail how the project manager and key staff will be assigned to this project. Identify the availability of the project manager and key staff to address any questions or concerns as well as to attend meetings to present the findings to key ECIA staff.
- d. Has litigation ever been filed against the firm? If so, explain in detail. Is there litigation against the firm currently in progress? If so, explain in detail.

4.1.2 Statement of Methods and Procedures:

- a. Provide a statement describing the Scope of Work and provide a detailed breakdown and description of the specific steps, services, methods, and study products that will be employed to gather the data, analyze the findings, develop recommendations, and coordinate implementation as requested. Firms may elect to include in this section any innovative methods or concepts that might be beneficial to ECIA as long as the minimum requirements are met.

4.1.3 Structure and Content of Work Product:

- a. Describe the way in which the work product will be structured and presented upon completion.

4.1.4 Project Time Table:

- a. Provide the anticipated start and completion date for the project and estimated dates for the fulfillment of each work phase and task. This proposed project timetable will be used as the basis for the project timetable to be included in the project contract. ECIA anticipates that the

successful consultant will be able to begin this project on or before November 20, 2025.

- b. Describe techniques the firm would use to keep the ECIA Rebranding Committee abreast of the project progress and how the firm will meet the proposed timeline.

4.1.5 References:

- a. All proposals should include a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least three (3) references of the same or larger size and complexity as ECIA who will attest to the successful completion and implementation of a rebranding initiative by the firm during the past five (5) years.

4.1.6 Cost of Services:

- a. Provide a detailed not-to exceed cost estimate for all work to be performed. The breakdown should include, at a minimum, the following for each task to be performed: the timeline for completion, the estimated number of hours for completion, and the not-to exceed cost for that task. Do not include the cost of “additional services” outside the scope of work in response to this proposal.
- b. Based on cost of services, ECIA reserves the option to contract work in phases.

4.2 INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS:

4.2.1 Submission of Proposals: Proposals will be received until 3:00 pm (CT) on October 17, 2025. All proposals must be submitted via email with the following information in the subject line:

ECIA Rebranding – RFP 2025

To be considered, consultants must submit a complete response to the RFP. The proposal must be signed by an official authorized to bind the Consultant to its provisions. Quotations must include a statement as to the period during which the quotation remains valid, which must be at least ninety (90) days.

Emailed proposals must be received by [mhingtgen@ecia.org](mailto:mhintgen@ecia.org) and a carbon copy to mquinn@ecia.org no later than the time specified. Proposals shall be submitted via email in .pdf format that allows for printing in hard copy in 8½ x 11 booklet format. An email will be sent confirming receipt of the proposal within 24 hours or by 3:00 pm (CT) on October 18, 2025.

NO LATE SUBMITTALS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

Proposals may be withdrawn or modified by email resubmission in full prior to the proposal submission deadline.

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, an addendum will be provided to all Respondents who have been placed on the official list with the Executive Director.

ECIA reserves the right to accept or reject all or any part of any proposal, waive informalities, and award the contract to the best consultant who will serve the interests of ECIA.

4.3 GENERAL INFORMATION

4.3.1 Questions, Inquiries and Clarifications:

- a. Any questions or other inquiries concerning this RFP must be submitted via email by 3:00 pm (CT) on September 26, 2025, to Mae Hingtgen, Executive Director, ECIA, e-mail: mhingtgen@ecia.org written questions and inquiries will be answered via e-mail.
- b. Clarifications and additional information, if any, will be posted as addendums on the ECIA website at www.ecia.org. It is the responsibility of the prospective proposer to check the website for updates.

4.3.2 Proprietary Information: Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by any Respondent in connection with this solicitation will not be subject to disclosure under the Iowa Freedom of Information Act; however, the offeror must invoke the protections of this section PRIOR to or upon submission of the data or other materials and must clearly identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary.

4.3.3 Confidentiality: All proposals and material submitted become the property of ECIA. All proposal information, including detailed price and cost information, shall be held in confidence during the evaluation process and before the Notice of Intent to Award is issued. Thereafter, proposals may be disclosed as a matter of public record.

4.3.4 Joint ventures shall not be allowed with this RFP.

4.3.5 Conflict of Interest: Each proposal shall include a statement indicating whether the firm or any persons working on the contract has a possible conflict of interest and, if so, the specific nature of the conflict. ECIA reserves the right to cancel the award if any interest disclosed from any source could either give the appearance or a conflict or cause speculation as to the objectivity of the program to be developed by the proposing firm. ECIA's determination regarding conflict(s) of interest shall be final.

4.3.6 Limitations: This request for Proposals does not commit ECIA to award a contract, pay any costs incurred in preparation for travel to ECIA, to present a proposal to this request, or to procure or contract for services. All proposals submitted in response to this Request for Proposal become the property of ECIA. ECIA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received or to cancel this Request for Proposal in part or in its entirety. After proposals are reviewed, ECIA will select the proposal that is deemed in the best interest of the organization.

SECTION 5: TIMELINE FOR SELECTION PROCESS

Rebranding Timeline	
Date	Activity
September 15, 2025	Release Date of RFP
September 26, 2025; 3:00 pm (CT)	Clarification Submission Deadline
October 17, 2025; 3:00 pm (CT)	Proposals Due
October 20 - 31, 2025	Proposal Review and Potential Interviews
October 31, 2025	Evaluation of Proposals Completed
November 5, 2025	Intent to Award Announced
November 19, 2025	ECIA Council Approval
November 20, 2025	Work Begins (or as soon as possible after contract is signed).

SECTION 6: EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCESS

ECIA will use all facts, information, and data available to finalize its evaluation of the RFPs. Failure of the Respondent to provide any information requested in this RFP may result in disqualification of the proposal. The sole objective will be to recommend the award of a contract to the Respondent whose proposal is most responsive and most advantageous to the needs and goals of ECIA.

Proposals will be evaluated with respect to the completeness of data provided; support for all claims made; overall approach taken in the proposal; and response to interview questions, if interviews are conducted. The technical evaluation and ranking of proposals shall be accomplished utilizing the following criteria and point values:

- Previous background and experience designing and implementing the rebranding process, engaging stakeholders, and developing a robust, actionable plan. Qualifications of project staff who will work on the project. (25 points)
- Thoroughness of material submitted, conceptual approach, and process related to the proposed scope of work as well as the ability to manage and coordinate the project effectively with ECIA staff. Consultant's understanding of the needs of ECIA and proposing solutions to address those needs. (25 points)
- Cost of services proposed. Fee proposals should outline fees for each task outlined in this Rebranding RFP. (25 points)
- Projected time frame, from beginning to a prompt project completion date. (20 points)
- References. References should be from projects similar in nature. (5 points)

TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE 100

SECTION 7: AWARD OF CONTRACT

Each Respondent submitting a proposal in response to this RFP will be notified via email as to the acceptance or rejection of their proposal. ECIA plans to release such letters within sixty (60) days of the proposed submission date. ECIA may delay this action if it is deemed to be in the best interest of ECIA.

The contract will be awarded to the best qualified Respondent according to the bid/proposal criteria and a written award letter will be issued.

1. Award of a bid/proposal requires formal approval by the ECIA Council.

Contract(s) may be negotiated with the Respondent whose proposal is selected by ECIA, considering cost as well as other factors based on the criteria described above, all as solely determined by ECIA. Award of contract may be made without discussion or opportunity for oral presentation after proposals are received. Proposals should, therefore, be submitted initially on the most favorable terms, from both price and technical standpoints.

ECIA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to waive any informality in proposals received, to accept or reject any or all of the items in the proposals, and award the contract in whole or in part, if it is deemed in the best interest of ECIA.

No proposal will be accepted from, nor will a contract be awarded to, any Respondent who is deemed to be irresponsible or unreliable by ECIA.

Taxes – ECIA, as an organization of governments, is exempt from any and all taxes.

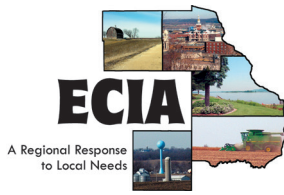
Non-Iowa Corporations – Unless waived by ECIA, before or at the time that the contract is awarded to a corporation domiciled outside the State of Iowa, such corporation shall obtain authorization to do business in the State of Iowa and appoint an agent for service of process.

Such corporations must furnish ECIA with a certificate from the State of Iowa to the effect that a certificate of authority to do business in the State of Iowa has been issued by the office and is still valid. There shall also be procured from the Iowa Secretary of State a certified copy of the designation of place of business and appointment of agent for service of process, or a letter from the Iowa Secretary of State that such designation of place of business and agent for service of process has been made.

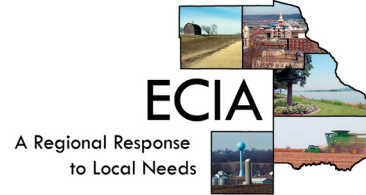
The laws of the State of Iowa shall govern the contract (herein referred to as the Contract) executed between the successful bidder and ECIA and any interpretations or constructions thereof. Further, the place of performance and transaction of business shall be deemed to be in the State of Iowa, and in the event of litigation, the exclusive venue and place of jurisdiction shall be the State of Iowa.

Location Preference – Firms located within ECIA's five-county area in eastern Iowa are encouraged to apply and will be given preference.

There are many variations of the main logo that have surfaced over the years:



Original logo with and without tagline



Original logo with different fonts



Logo for apparel



Versions used for various projects



Letterhead logo

Main website: www.ecia.org

APPENDIX B - CURRENT ECIA AFFILIATE LOGOS

Affiliate breakdown according to area/department with individual web presence noted

ECIA

- East Central Development Corporation



Community Development

- ECIA Home Repair Program
- Eastern Iowa Rural Utility Services System (EIRUSS) (no logo)



Economic Development

- E.C.I.A. Business Growth Inc.
- Prosperity Eastern Iowa (PEI)



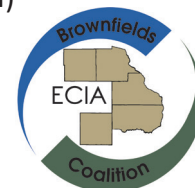
Housing

- Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Authority (EIRHA)
- Eastern Iowa Regional Housing Corporation (EIRHC)
- EIRHC Housing Trust Fund (HTF)



Special Programs

- Community Solutions of Eastern Iowa (CSEI)
- ECIA Brownfields Program (Coalition)



Transit

- Region 8 Regional Transit Authority (RTA)

www.rta8.org



(many more variations of this logo currently being used)

Transportation

- Dubuque Metropolitan Area Transportation Study (DMATS)
- Regional Planning Affiliation (RPA 8)



www.eciatrans.org

(DMATS and RPA are separate entities that currently don't have logos and want logos. This logo is used on their website.)