



**Request for Information: 2021-002
Marketing for the Living Wage Initiative**

Indianapolis Private Industry Council, Inc., d/b/a EmployIndy seeking information from qualified organizations to provide marketing services for the Living Wage Initiative.

EmployIndy Background

EmployIndy guides the local workforce ecosystem and makes strategic investments to remove barriers to quality employment for underserved and underrepresented residents. As the workforce development board for Marion County, guided by 21 business, civic, education and non-profit community leaders, EmployIndy invests \$18.5 million in public, private and philanthropic funds for both youth and adults annually.

Living Wage Initiative Background

The Living Wage Initiative (LWI) is a project started by local volunteers, and now housed in EmployIndy. The purpose of the program is to increase the number of jobs in Marion County that pay a living wage, since individuals making a living wage and higher have better health, educational outcomes, quality of life and more.

The initiative's core premise is that rather than raising worker wages through mandatory, policy-based approaches (e.g., minimum wage laws), put a spotlight on employers who do pay a living wage and make job seekers more aware of who these companies are, thus creating market pressures for employers to raise wages in order to attract and retain talent.

The threshold for "living wage" is \$18/hour with employer-based health insurance support, or \$22/hour without. These figures are based on a study of Indianapolis by the Brookings Institute in 2018. The staff and volunteers for LWI will certify employers who qualify as "living wage employers" and drive the work spotlighting them and raising the community's awareness of their wage levels. A secondary track for companies endeavoring to raise wages and be certified will also be provided by the LWI in order to support employers in this process. One's initial certification as a living wage employer will be for 2 years, at which time a renewal can be pursued.

This carrot-rather-than-stick approach is or has been present in a handful of cities in the U.S. The work of Indianapolis' LWI has drawn considerably on the work of Orange County Living Wage (Orange County, North Carolina) and the living wage certification offered by Just Economics (Asheville, NC).

The Living Wage Initiative is housed within EmployIndy, a natural partner given our focus on connecting Marion County residents with "good and promising jobs" while also nurturing the talent ecosystem so that employers can thrive because the necessary talent is present in the community. LWI is driven by a volunteer Steering Committee and a part-time consultant, with support from EmployIndy.

LWI completed a feasibility study in early 2021, conducting brief interviews with leaders of 24 businesses, non-profit organizations and faith centers. The response was unanimously positive, along with meaningful cautions and ideas introduced. In April 2021, LWI received notice of a grant award from the Lilly Endowment, which covers 1/3 of the first 3 years of operating costs. The additional necessary funding will be gathered through new grants along with contributions from individuals.

A landing page for LWI currently exists: www.livingwageindy.org.

The introduction of the Living Wage Certification to the community and start of certifying employers is on an aggressive timeline that supports seeing higher wages sooner rather than later, and clear information about current living wage employers available when more job seekers are anticipated in Fall 2021. LWI is committed to achieving the outcomes promised from its first year of funding from the Lilly Endowment: 50 certifications completed, 10 employers on track for certification, and \$180,000 of increased wages by June 30, 2022.

Aligning with the timeline, the LWI team is currently in a planning and development phase, with considerable work underway defining the criteria for certification, determining the supports for employers interested in certification, outlining specific benefits of certification, building the case for support (for use in marketing to employers and garnering financial support), and more. A shift into a Beta period is planned for early July 2021. During the Beta, employers will be able to review the criteria, apply, and be reviewed. The first certifications are anticipated to be named in September 2021. While in the Beta period, LWI anticipates a heavy amount of questions and ideas to emerge as employers begin to work with the criteria, benefits and application provided. LWI will have a limited rollout of the Beta, with distinct work targeting a diverse number of employers who, hopefully, will be the 20 or so initially certified employers.

At this time, LWI seeks a marketing partner to support the initial branding of LWI and development of the LWI website by July 1st, with a revision in August 2021 reflecting learnings from the Beta. The budget for this work (as detailed below) is \$30,000-\$35,000. (Later in 2021, following the Beta period, LWI will engage a marketing partner to support the fully public launch of living wage certification and marketing of it to employers and job seekers. This marketing partner may or may not be the marketing partner in Spring 2021.)

Project Scope and Specifications

Phase 1 (By July 1)

Branding

- Logo development (may or may not reflect the cursory branding seen on the landing page)
- Tagline (not absolutely necessary; could be during/after Beta)
- Letterhead creation
- Basic branding guidelines (colors and font)

- Template for newsletter and letter-style emails in Mailchimp or Constant Contact

Website

- Create wireframe and explanation of UX and functionality
 - Approximately 10-12 pages
- Pages to include a place for financial contributions with a form that integrates with donor software
- Provide imagery for website
- Limited copywriting of content drafted by LWI team
- Incorporate 2 basic application forms (certification and "aspiring" statuses) using Microsoft Forms, JotForm or a similar platform. Application data does not need to integrate with other software

Collateral

- A physical "leave behind" tri-fold or similar piece summarizing the initiative, suitable for employers and prospective donors
- An electronic version of "leave behind"

Phase 2 (In August, post-Beta)

Branding

- Tagline (if not done earlier)
- Possibly an additional email template in Mailchimp or Constant Contact

Website

- Limited copy revision

Collateral

- Copy revision as necessary to initial leave behind
- One-page introduction for workforce development sites and job coaches

Additional Notes

- Branding, including website, to be basically compatible with EmployIndy's branding (full co-branding not necessary)
- Email templates to be user-friendly and conducive to LWI team members self-producing emails
- LWI has its own Mailchimp account currently
- Website will be owned by LWI/EmployIndy and friendly for LWI team members making copy changes, changing imagery, etc.

Response

EmployIndy is seeking information from qualified vendors who are capable of addressing the above stated required functionalities.

Please provide a complete written response to this RFI.

The following information should be included:

1. Company Overview:
 - a. Provide a brief organizational summary.

2. Project:
 - a. Describe (and ideally show an example) of similar branding and website work.
 - b. Why do you think your firm is uniquely suited to support this effort?
 - c. How would you approach this project with a 6-8 week initial timeline differently than the same project with a 6 month timeline?
 - d. What would be important for the LWI and EmployIndy team to do in order to support successfully work on this project with your firm?

3. Budget:
 - a. Provide requested funding amount.

Entities may submit questions to cmontgomery@employindy.org until May 7, 2021 at 5:00 pm ET. A response to all questions will be available on the EmployIndy website, www.employindy.org, no later than close of business, May 11, 2021.

Applicants must submit one (1) electronic copy of responses. Please note that EmployIndy will not reimburse vendors for any costs they incur in developing their response.

All responses should be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. EST, May 17, 2021 to Carla Montgomery at cmontgomery@employindy.org.