



Request for Proposals

America 250: National Signature Program Planning *A Roadmap for National Signature Programs for America's Semiquincentennial*

The America 250 Foundation seeks qualified event/programming firms to submit proposals to support program planning for America's 250th anniversary commemoration culminating in 2026.

Please submit proposals to: **Glenn Stach**
Planning and Program Development
gstach@america250.org

Proposals are due by: **Friday, June 5, 2020**
5:00 pm – Eastern Daylight Time

Questions concerning this Request for Proposals (RFP) should be directed via email to Rebekah Lawrence at rlawrence@america250.org

I. Introduction

As stated in the *United States Semiquincentennial Commission Act of 2016* (Public Law 114-196), Congress established the United States Semiquincentennial Commission (the "Commission") to provide for the observance and commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.

Through planning, encouraging, developing, and coordinating local, state, national, and international activities the Commission is advancing planning and programming. The America 250 Foundation, the nonprofit partner of the Commission seeks national expertise from qualified firms to establish a high-level conceptual framework for "National Signature Programs" (NSP). The selected contractor will provide the America 250 Foundation with no less than 12 program concepts for consideration. These preliminary concepts will provide the Foundation, and in turn, the Commission, with a portfolio of program ideas, capable of being advanced/scoped for implementation.

II. Scope of Work

The selected contractor (Contractor), working in coordination with the America 250 Foundation (Client), with oversight provided by the Commission's *Committee on Planning and Program Development*, will envision and plan a comprehensive portfolio of National Signature Programs that will incorporate at least the minimum deliverables presented below. (All timelines measured from the date of the Client's issued notice to proceed):

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Task 1 – NSP Strategic Kickoff – (Within 7 Days): Facilitate a half-day virtual Kick-Off Meeting with Client representatives, representatives from the Commission’s *Committee on Planning and Program Development*, and relevant Stakeholders. The focus of the kickoff will be to confirm schedule, assign and coordinate tasks, and reviews. In preparation for this meeting the Contractor shall thoroughly familiarize themselves and their participating team members with the Commission’s *Report to the President* (<https://www.america250.org/home/showdocument?id=6>), calling specific attention to review the categories and direction of Commission National Signature Programs, as well as additional contextual brand and planning materials provided by the Client upon contract award.

A key discussion/ decision point for this initial meeting will be the consensus of National Signature Program Selection Criteria. The considerations governing a program concept’s suitability and vetting as a candidate as a National Signature Program. (hereafter referenced as the *Selection Criteria*):

- Contribution to a diverse and engaging portfolio of National Signature Programs
- Criteria Scoring for National Signature Program (May include but not limited to):
 - *Brand Fit - Program Content, as relevant to America 250 visionary framework (Educate, Engage, Unite)*
 - *Commission Proprietary Advantage*
 - *Activation Potential*
 - *Audience(s) Alignment*
 - *Scalability (state extensions)*
 - *Virtual/ Digital Potential*
 - *Innovation/ Technology*
 - *Desired Outcomes/ Legacy Potential*
 - *Economic Impact*
 - *Project implementation costs and required resources*
 - *Leveraging national events, activities and properties (memorial day, other holidays, major sport and entertainment events, major international events)*

Deliverables:

- *1a. Meeting Agenda, and Meeting Summary,*
- *1b. Comprehensive Project Schedule (Spreadsheet format)*
- *1c. Slide Presentation on National Signature Program Selection Criteria (Draft for approval, submitted within seven (7) days following the Kickoff Meeting.)*

Task 2 – NSP Portfolio Development – 25 Most-Viable Concepts List:

(Within 30 Days): The Contractor shall, in consultation with the Client, assemble a conceptual-level portfolio of National Signature Programs. This task will include review of previously submitted program ideas, and facilitate solicitation of program ideas from the Commission’s Program Planning Committee (The Committee), Affiliates, Partners, and Stakeholders, including Commission Task Forces. The Contractor shall be prepared to facilitate meetings and direct correspondence, with the assistance of America 250 staff to these parties to identify alignment of program visioning.

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Cultivation of concepts shall be organized by the following Commission-established *Categories*: (Note: a description of program categories is available on page 50 of the Report to the President (Link provided above)).

- A. National Touring Showcases/Journeys**
- B. Place-Based/Convening Site Programs**
- C. National Parks and Historic Site Programs**
- D. Virtual/Digital Programs**
- E. Social/Societal Impact Programs**

The Contractor shall also consider and annotate concepts by temporal categories identifying when and with what duration along the broad spectrum of the 250th commemoration timeline (2020-2026) the programs fall:

- 1. Catalytic Signature Programs:** Those programs that hold potential to generate interest, momentum, or short term awareness and participation, but whose public-facing program elements do not exceed 3-6 months. (Emphasis given to program concepts for launch in 2021-2022).
- 2. Cumulative Signature Programs:** Multi-faceted programs whose public-facing program elements exceed 6 months in duration, and build momentum by incorporating multiple experiences or programs across the commemorative timeline of 2020-2026, and build a crescendo of activity progressing toward 2026. Additionally, some programs may be specifically directed toward a 2026 release, but require planning begin in 2020.

Each concept shall illustrate its congruence or ranking with the Selection Criteria, and compose a one half-page narrative with illustrative supporting imagery, and detailed criteria scoring.

Deliverable:

- *2a. Document via spreadsheet, listing of national signature programs and their attributes as solicited from Commission, Commission affiliates, partners, and those identified by consultants and those of the Contractor.*
- *2b. Deliver a slide portfolio of 25 highest ranking preliminary National Signature Programs.*
 - *Concept portfolio shall demonstrate a diverse and engaging collection, with equity across all five NSP Categories, and with balanced representation of both short-term “Catalytic” or long arc “Cumulative” effort.*
 - *Concepts shall be presented on no more than two slides each, and include a brief ½ page narrative; supporting imagery; criteria ranking and summary and context slides supporting process and analysis.*

Task 3 – NSP Concept Refinement 50% – 15 Concepts (Within 55 Days): The Contractor shall, in consultation with America 250 staff, refine or substitute based on Client approval, the high-level portfolio of National Signature Programs presented in Task 2. The focus of this task shall clearly articulate scope and scale, identify and justify preliminary cost estimates, activation potential and articulate a resource (funding) plan. This 50%-level submission shall deliver a portfolio of at least fifteen (15) viable program concepts across *Categories A-E* identified in Task 2 (25 total).

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As a part of this task, the Contractor shall advance recommendations for each program concept pursuant to the performance measurements first established under the *List of Considerations/Criteria* from Task 2. Specific emphasis at this stage shall advance program specifics relevant to recommended timelines and activation potential for each concept.

Each program consideration shall demonstrate recommendations/ranking each concept per the approved *Selection Criteria (See Task 1)*, and also advance concept positioning in areas including but not limited to:

- Activation Potential
- Recommended partner activation and marketing platforms
- Media Partnership Opportunities
- Cost Benefit Analysis
- Ability to accelerate or leverage National Partner programs, and affiliates
- Leveraging the Fed Agency network and current partners
- Audience(s) Alignment
- Economic Impact
- Virtual/ Digital Potential
- Innovation/ Technology
- Impact on partner visibility and value

Deliverable: *Presentation of at least 15 revised National Signature Program concepts and supporting materials at a 50% level of completion/ detail to include.*

- *3a. Deliver a slide portfolio of 15 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs.*
 - *Updated concept portfolio shall demonstrate refinement of a diverse and engaging collection, with equity across all five NSP Categories, and with balanced representation of both short-term “Catalytic” or long arc “Cumulative” effort.*
 - *Each concept shall be presented on five slides each, and include a revised brief ½ page narrative; supporting imagery; criteria ranking, and Conceptual level analysis on program positioning and activation (identified above).*
 - *Summary and context slides supporting process and analysis shall be included.*

Task 4 – NSP Portfolio for Preliminary Approval/ Selection 75% – 12 Concepts

(Within 75 Days): The Contractor shall, in consultation with Client, refine or substitute based on feedback, the portfolio of National Signature Programs presented in Task 3. The focus of this task shall advance detail and specificity of program concepts and delivery. This 75%-level submission shall deliver a refined portfolio of twelve (12) viable program concepts across *Categories A-E* identified in Task 2.

During this task, the Contractor shall advance recommendations for each program concept pursuant to the performance measurements first established under the *List of Considerations/Criteria* from Task 2, and the activation and cost considerations advanced in Task 3. Specific emphasis at this stage shall advance specifics relevant to recommended partner activation and marketing platforms, for each concept.

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Deliverable: Presentation of 12 revised National Signature Program concepts and supporting materials at a 75% level of completion/ detail.

- 4a. Deliver a **slide portfolio** of 12 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs.
 - Updated concept portfolio shall demonstrate refinement of a diverse and engaging collection, with equity across all five NSP Categories, and with balanced representation of both short-term “Catalytic” or long arc “Cumulative” effort.
 - Each refined concept shall be presented on five slides each, and include a revised brief ½ page narrative; supporting imagery; criteria ranking, and thorough analysis on program positioning and activation (identified above).
 - Summary and context slides supporting process and analysis shall be included.
- 4b. Deliver a **pitch book** on the 12 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs.
 - The product will represent the summary information provided in the slide portfolio, but expand to include more exhaustive research, analysis and positioning of each concept.
 - The pitch book shall be well-designed graphically with supporting imagery and layout, and thorough in its analysis and consideration of each program concept, beyond the summary information listed on the slide portfolio.

Task 5 – Revised National Signature Program Portfolio for Approval – 12 Final Concepts (Before December 31, 2020):

The Contractor shall, in consultation with America 250 staff, refine the portfolio of National Signature Programs presented in Task 4. The focus of this task shall advance detail and specificity of program concepts and delivery. This final submission shall deliver a portfolio of twelve (**12 total**) viable program concepts across *Categories A-E* identified in Task 2.

As a part of this task, the Contractor shall advance final recommendations for each program concept pursuant to the performance measurements first established under the *List of Considerations/ Criteria* from Task 2. Specific emphasis at this stage shall advance specific recommendations and vetting of recommended partner activation and marketing platforms, for each concept.

The work of this task will be submitted at a 95% Draft in time for the Commission’s **November 20, 2020** meeting, with materials made available no later than November 2, 2020. The Contractor will revise any final comments and recommendations into a final submittal of recommendations to be delivered no later than **December 31, 2020**. The final reporting shall be formatted to provide individual, stand-alone, program proposals, suitable for pricing, and at a detail that enables each recommended program to be scoped for implementation (not in contract).

Deliverables:

- 5a. Deliver an updated **slide portfolio** of 12 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs.
- 5b. Deliver a **95% pitch book** on the 12 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs for consideration at the Commission’s November 2020 meeting.

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- *The product will represent the summary information provided in the slide portfolio, but expand to include more exhaustive research, analysis and positioning of each concept.*
- *The pitch book shall be well-designed graphically with supporting imagery and layout, and thorough in its analysis and consideration of each program concept, beyond the summary information listed on the slide portfolio.*
- *5c. Following feedback received during the Commission's November meeting, the Contractor will deliver a **revised set of individual pitch books on each of the 12 highest ranking/ Client approved preliminary National Signature Programs, following Client comment and review.***
 - *The product will represent the summary information provided in the slide portfolio, but expand to include more exhaustive research, analysis and positioning of each concept.*
 - *Each pitch book shall be well-designed graphically with supporting imagery and layout, and thorough in its analysis and consideration of each program concept, beyond the summary information listed on the slide portfolio.*
 - *Each pitch book shall provide the required level of detail necessary to bid the individual project for implementation (Not In Contract).*

Ownership of Deliverables: All materials provided during the course of this work-for-hire contract are considered to be preliminary work products and shall be retained by the Client. The Foundation reserves the right to hold all twelve of the selected preliminary concept materials provided at the close of Task 5 and will consider, with the approval of the Commission, the right to move forward with the Contractor, on any, or none of the revised submittals provided at the close of this contract. At the will of the Client, the Contractor shall be granted the first right of consideration to enter into negotiations with the Foundation on the implementation of any revised program concepts provided.

The tasks undertaken, deliverables submitted, and resources assigned by the successful bidder shall meet or exceed the following expectations or requirements:

Responding to the RFP

Submissions should not be overly complex or nor longer than ten (10) single-sided pages in length for scope response. Additional pages or stand-alone credentials PDFs with program examples may be added, but may not exceed an additional ten (10) single-sided pages. Only electronic submissions in pdf format will be accepted.

Qualified proposals must include but are not limited to:

Part A: Technical Proposal: (10-page limit)

- A cover letter executed by an individual authorized to execute a contract with the America 250 Foundation for these services and include direct phone, email, and address information for that individual.
- All the proposal elements identified as required in the Scope of Work section above.
- Three (3) references from clients for whom the firm has performed similar services, including current contact information.
- Any additional information the responding bidder (Contractor) deems pertinent to his or her proposal that might prove useful during the review process, including the location of the Contractor's primary office and any satellite offices.

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- *Staff and Subconsultant Qualifications and Availability:* Bidders shall identify key personnel assigned responsibility to the project along with all other individuals (and their respective locations) supporting the work. Each project team member identified shall be listed within the proposal, including their title within the company, and their % availability to contribute to the work product. Please note, senior leadership or point of contact (POC) are expected to contribute at a high level and (if awarded the contract) shall not be substituted without the expressed approval of the Client.
- Cost breakdowns shall accompany each task, and bidders must include a statement confirming that their price proposal will remain valid for 120 days from the date of submission.
- If sub-Contractors are anticipated to complete the work their anticipated %workload of overall fee shall be clearly delineated.

Part B: Supporting Material (Up to 20 pages – Separate from the Technical Proposal)

- Responsive bidders may provide additional supporting material in a stand-alone document to include promotional summaries on past successful projects completed within the last five years

Questions During Bidding

All questions regarding bidding shall be submitted electronically no later than **5pm on May 28, 2020**. A single one-time response to questions will be distributed to all bidders **by noon on June 1, 2020**. No questions shall be answered individually. All questions shall be submitted to rlawrence@america250.org

Evaluation Criteria

The following factors shall be considered in selecting the Contractor. Each factor below will be weighted by the Client to assess fit and alignment of the proposed task and the submitting firms:

1. Proven track record planning nationwide anniversaries and high profile celebrations
2. Proven ability to support national fundraising campaigns, through program planning and execution, including excellence in digital and social channels
3. Fully-integrated program development and execution from idea, funding, planning, promotion, implementation, evaluation, and legacy
4. Demonstrated balance of national-level corporate for-profit and nonprofit client base, with substantial client engagement
5. Demonstrated ability to develop customized programs in-house, develop national platform for each, and execute at a high level
6. Expertise in media and marketing partnerships, awareness and marketing asset valuation
7. Demonstrated commitment to and expertise in successful social impact and brand legacy
8. Capacity to manage multiple partners interacting with a single brand
9. Ability developing large scale staff and volunteer management programs
10. Experience of designated staff, and principals committed to the project
11. Overall project cost and commitment to deliver the work for the costs proposed
12. Demonstrated ability to implement and manage a process for soliciting, evaluating, selecting, and coordinating development and execution of programs conceived by and involving other entities.

Additional Consideration/ Criteria

In addition to the criteria identified above, this Request for Proposals welcomes and considers favorably, the participation of minority-owned small businesses, veteran-owned and women-owned small

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businesses, HUBZone small businesses, and small disadvantaged businesses as prime Contractor, or included within the responding Contractor’s team. It is encouraged that at least 15% of the overall proposed fee be provided by businesses meeting one of the above stated categories as subconsultant, joint venture, or other contractual arrangements.

Applicants should be in compliance with all Federal laws, including, but not limited to, Equal Employment Opportunity (Executive Order 11246), Employment Eligibility Verification, and Family and Medical Leave requirements.

Schedule for Selection

The schedule for Contractor selection is expected to proceed as indicated below:

RFP Release	May 18, 2020
All Bidder Questions Due	May 28, 2020
Proposals Due	June 5, 2020
Contractor Interviews (Virtual)	June 8-15, 2020
Contractor Selection; Notice to Proceed	June 30, 2020

End