



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: BRANDING

PROJECT SUMMARY

In preparation for our 50th anniversary year in 2023, PFLAG National seeks a qualified consultant to evaluate our brand, including the organization's name, logo, tagline, colors, fonts, program branding, and associated materials.

We want to ensure that anyone who needs PFLAG can find PFLAG, and that we have a look and feel that is current, fresh, and connected.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

PFLAG was founded in 1973 by Jeanne Manford, a schoolteacher and mother from Queens, NY. In 1972, after her gay son was beaten and berated, Jeanne joined him at the Christopher Street Liberation Day March—and early precursor to Pride—carrying a handmade sign that said, “Parents of Gays: Unite in Support for Our Children.” She was the first parent to march openly, and at the end of the march, she was surrounded by LGBTQ marchers asking her to speak with their parents. Nine months later, on March 11, 1973, PFLAG—then known as Parents of Gays—held its first meeting in the basement of a church in Greenwich Village, NYC.

In the next years, through word of mouth and community need, similar groups sprang up around the country, offering "safe havens" and mutual support for parents with gay and lesbian children. Following the 1979 National March for Gay and Lesbian Rights, representatives from these groups met for the first time in Washington, DC.

By 1980, Parents FLAG—or P-FLAG—began to distribute information to educational institutions and communities of faith nationwide, establishing itself as a source of information for the general public. In

1981, members decided to launch a national organization, and in 1982, the Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Inc., then representing some 20 groups, was incorporated in California and granted non-profit, tax-exempt status. The first PFLAG National office was established in Los Angeles under founding president—and PFLAG LA founder—Adele Starr.

In 1990, following a period of significant growth, PFLAG employed an Executive Director, expanded its staff, and moved to Washington, DC. In 1993, PFLAG soon after added the word "Families" to the name, making the name "Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays," and added bisexual people to its mission and work. In 1998, PFLAG added transgender people to its mission.

At the turn of the century, the national office of PFLAG—PFLAG National—began to also develop signature programs to support the chapter network and to raise the family and ally voice in the battle for equality. Programs like Cultivating Respect: Safe Schools for All, Straight for Equality, and the National Scholarship Program.

In 2014, the organization officially changed its name from the acronym for "Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays" to, simply, PFLAG. This change was made to attempt to accurately reflect PFLAG members, those PFLAG serves, and the inclusive work PFLAG has been doing for decades.

PFLAG has 364 volunteer-based chapters and nearly 250,000 members and supporters crossing multiple generations of families in major urban centers, small cities, and rural areas across America.

ORGANIZATION MISSION AND VISION

The following is current as of August 1, 2021:

Mission

Our mission is to build on a foundation of loving families united with LGBTQ+ people and allies who support one another, and to educate ourselves and our communities to speak up as advocates until all hearts and minds respect, value and affirm LGBTQ people.

Vision

PFLAG envisions a world where diversity is celebrated and all people are respected, valued, and affirmed inclusive of their sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.

THE CHALLENGE

Throughout its nearly 50-year history, PFLAG has grown tremendously along with its community. Having once primarily offered only support groups, PFLAG now offers support, education, and major advocacy efforts locally, statewide, regionally, and at the federal level.

As we move into 2023—our 50th anniversary year—we must reflect on who we are, what we do, and how we express those things to the LGBTQ+ community, parents, extended family members, and a broad coalition of allies to the community.

While at one time PFLAG was the only organization of its kind, other Mom, Dad, and Parent organizations have started to spring up and claim the space. Some of PFLAG's own members use the names of those organizations interchangeably with our own (e.g. they give out Free Mom Hugs at Pride; they call themselves Mama Bears), not realizing these are separate (and competing) groups.

Another significant challenge arose in 2014, when we let the long name go in favor of having PFLAG as our official name and no longer an acronym for “Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.” This move was made in service of being more inclusive, but because we had no meaningful plan in place to bring people along and explain it, it led to brand confusion, lack of understanding of who PFLAG is or what we do, and in some cases complete lack of awareness of what our name now is (both in the press and by our members and supporters). Seven years later, some of our own chapters and their leaders still don't know that we are no longer using PFLAG as an acronym.

There is also the challenge of a nearly entirely volunteer-led chapter network. Many chapters are resistant to using our logo so they change it without permission or guidance, many don't know (as noted above) that our name has changed and, due to budget constraints, many of them use outdated materials for years at a time. We have no real enforcement power over our chapters in terms of materials they use—including our logo and language.

While our voice remains strong, our visual brand is outdated and, much like our name, doesn't tell people who need PFLAG that PFLAG is who they need.

As we prepare to enter our 50th anniversary year, we must ensure that there is a cohesiveness to our look, feel, and overall brand, so that any time you find PFLAG—whether it's at the national level or any chapter event in the U.S.—we are united as one powerful organization built on a bedrock of decades of important history.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RESPOND

PFLAG National seeks qualified consultants or firms (“Consultant”) with extensive experience in branding and naming, and strong facilitation skills. Experience with 501c3, mission-driven, chapter-based organizations is critical; experience with LGBTQ+ organizations is preferred.

PFLAG National is committed to diversity among its vendors and contractors. It does not discriminate, nor tolerate discrimination, based on race, ethnicity, religious creed, color, national origin, ancestry, physical disability, chronic illness, neurodiversity, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding or related medical conditions), gender, gender identity, gender expression, citizenship status, age, sexual orientation, matriculation, personal appearance, height and weight, family responsibilities, credit information, union membership, political affiliation, military and veteran status, status as a victim or family member of a victim of domestic violence, a sexual offense or stalking, or any other protected status under applicable law.

Additionally, whenever possible, it is PFLAG National’s goal to ensure that marginalized populations, small businesses, and union-affiliated businesses are utilized whenever possible for purchasing and contracting.

PROJECT SCOPE AND DELIVERABLES

The selected Consultant will work with a Branding Task Force of staff, board members, and regional directors to provide a comprehensive recommendation to the organization. The selected Consultant will be given access to staff and leadership, including board members, regional directors, chapter leaders, and other constituents during the course of the project. It is expected that the Consultant will seek input from chapter members, the great LGBTQ+ and family/ally community, and other interested stakeholders.

Of note and importance: the organization is currently undergoing a Strategic Planning process, which will end in January 2022. This project will build off the work being done in that project, including, potentially, a new mission and vision.

The project should include:

1. An evaluation of PFLAG National’s name, logo, tagline, colors, fonts, and associated materials, including chapter logos;
2. An evaluation of PFLAG’s program branding (including Straight for Equality); and
3. IP/trademark/service mark review and guidance for new materials.

The deliverables should include:

1. New organizational branding that may include a new name or acronym, logo, tagline, colors/fonts;
2. A brand “toolkit” for chapters that is consistent with new national organizational branding, which allows space for their desire to “personalize” the materials creatively;
3. Possible new program branding that is consistent with look/feel of new organizational branding;
4. A roadmap to roll out the new branding in advance of January 2023, the beginning of our 50th Anniversary Year;
5. A brand standards manual that will guide staff and leaders in seamlessly executing the new branding; and
6. Guidance on creating a new website, which will be built off of this new branding and launch timed to our 50th anniversary year in January 2023. A separate RFP to build a new website will be circulated in Fall 2021; please include in your deliverables if you would like to be considered for that project and we will circulate to you as well.

OWNERSHIP AND CONFIDENTIALITY

All intellectual property will become the property of PFLAG National. All data remains the sole property of PFLAG National. The Consultant shall agree to keep information related to this process in strict confidence, including, but not limited to, this Request for Proposals (RFP), the terms of the contract, and any confidential business information or proprietary information gathered during this project.

RESPONSE TO RFP

Responses should provide a straightforward and concise description of your ability to meet the requirements of this RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

Proposals should include the following information

1. Information about the Consultant, their experience, and staff, including the following:
 - a. Consultant's legal name, contact person and title, address, phone number, email address, type of business, and website.
 - b. Information about the Consultant's experience and expertise in working with similar organizations on similar projects, with similar scope and subject matter to this RFP.
 - c. List of all project team members, each team member's qualifications, including professional biography and CV, position and responsibilities with the Consultant, experience relevant to the project, years of experience, and role in the proposed project.
 - d. Information about the Consultant's workforce, ownership diversity, nondiscrimination policies, and any information related to a commitment to PFLAG's values.
2. Three references for which the consultant has conducted one or more of the following services: branding, renaming, logo creation, trademark/IP review. Include the references' name, address, and the relevant contact person's name and title with an email address and phone number.
3. Portfolio of at least two similar previously completed projects. Portions may be redacted to protect confidential information as needed.
4. Plan to complete the proposed project, including the following:
 - a. Proposed scope of work and project approach.
 - b. Timeline for the project, including major tasks and milestones tied to activities.
 - c. Project budget to include a proposed payment schedule tied to project milestones and deliverables.

SCORING

Proposals will be reviewed and evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. Qualifications (30%)
2. Scope and Quality of Proposal (30%)
3. Work Plan (25%)
4. Budget (10%)
5. Diversity of workforce and ownership (5%)

PROCESS FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND EVALUATION

1. **Submission Due Date:** Proposals are due by 5:00 pm (ET) on Friday, September 3, 2021.
2. **Submission Address and Where to Address Inquiries:** Proposals should be submitted via email to Liz Owen, Director of Communications, PFLAG National, at lowen@pflag.org.
3. **Conditions of Proposal:** All costs incurred in preparing a response to this RFP are the bidder's responsibility and will not be reimbursed by PFLAG National.
4. **Submission Instructions:**
 - a. All submissions must be delivered electronically ONLY, in pdf format.
 - b. Attachments/forms must be legible. Include relevant attachments only.
 - c. Submissions will not be returned.
 - d. An email acknowledgment of each submission received will be sent to the applicant.
 - e. All proposals received by the deadline will undergo a preliminary screening. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted for review and rating. Any proposal may be disqualified if it deviates from the submission instructions in the RFP.
 - f. Additional information may be required from the selected applicant prior to the awarding of the project.
 - g. Failure to disclose any history of deficiencies or client abuse shall disqualify the applicant from award of the engagement.

5. **Reservation of Rights:** PFLAG National reserves the right to request or negotiate changes in a proposal, accept all or part of a proposal, or reject any or all proposals. PFLAG National may, at its sole and absolute discretion, select no provider for these services if, in its determination, no applicant is sufficiently responsive to the need. PFLAG National reserves the right to disqualify any proposal that does not adhere to the RFP guidelines.
6. **Confidentiality:** If the bidder deems any material submitted to be proprietary or confidential, the bidder must indicate this in the response's relevant sections.
7. **Notification of Selection and Timeline:** The Branding Task Force will review proposals. After preliminary rating and ranking of proposals, interviews may be scheduled with finalists, particularly if two or more proposals are closely rated and/or more information is needed. References will be contacted for all finalists.

The Task Force will review and select a Consultant. The selection is not subject to appeal by an applicant. All applicants will receive written notification of PFLAG’s decision regarding their proposal.

In the event no proposal is selected, PFLAG National may elect to issue a new RFP to expand the pool of potential respondents.

TIMELINE

Friday, August 13, 2021	RFP release date
Friday, September 3, 2021	Deadline for submission of proposals
Tuesday, September 7- Friday, September 17, 2021	Evaluation of proposals by the task force
Monday, September 20- Friday, September 24, 2021	Meetings with highest-ranking applicants, as applicable
Friday, October 1, 2021	Notice of selection of Consultant
Monday, October 11, 2021	Contract start date