

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Strategic Partnerships, Sponsorship & Fundraising Consultant

May 14, 2026

Overview

The Institute for Local Government (ILG), a nonprofit organization serving California's local governments, is seeking proposals from qualified independent contractors or firms to support strategic fundraising, sponsorship development, partnership engagement, and limited event logistics services.

As ILG enters a significant milestone year, we are looking for a consultant who can help strengthen philanthropic engagement, expand strategic partnerships, and support sponsorship development for a September anniversary fundraising event and awards reception in Sacramento.

This anniversary year is an opportunity to elevate the importance of effective local government leadership, civic trust, public engagement, workforce development, and community resilience across California. ILG is looking for a consultant who is excited about helping connect mission-aligned partners to this work and helping build long-term support for local government capacity-building efforts statewide.

The selected consultant will support both:

- Immediate philanthropic and partnership development opportunities, and
- Sponsorship development and coordination connected to ILG's anniversary event.

Success in this role will depend heavily on relationship-building, thoughtful outreach, and the ability to help translate ILG's statewide credibility and mission into meaningful partnership opportunities.

ILG is seeking a consultant who can help shape strategy while also supporting implementation and day-to-day follow-through. We are looking for someone who can operate as both a strategic thought partner and a hands-on collaborator.

Preference will be given to Sacramento-based consultants or firms with strong California networks and familiarity with local government, civic, philanthropic, or public-sector audiences.

Background

Founded in 1955 by the League of California Cities, ILG is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that provides education, training, and capacity-building services to local governments across California.

ILG's work focuses on:

- Leadership and governance
- Public engagement
- Sustainable and resilient communities
- Workforce and civic education

ILG partners with local governments, philanthropy, civic organizations, utilities, infrastructure and technology providers, and other mission-aligned stakeholders throughout California.

ILG leadership and staff will help support introductions and relationship cultivation efforts where appropriate. The consultant will be expected to help coordinate, advance, and strategically manage partnership opportunities.

Scope of Services

1. Strategic Fundraising & Partnership Development

The consultant will support ILG's near-term fundraising and partnership goals, including:

- Identifying philanthropic funding opportunities aligned with ILG's mission and programs
- Supporting cultivation and outreach to prospective funders and partners
- Assisting with strategic partnership development and relationship management
- Helping position ILG's anniversary year and statewide impact as a platform for partnership engagement
- Supporting sponsor and donor communications, outreach coordination, and follow-up
- Developing and maintaining a fundraising and partnership tracking system or pipeline

The consultant may also support:

- Coordination of proposal development
- Sponsor package refinement
- Strategic messaging and positioning
- Meeting preparation and follow-up materials

2. Anniversary Event Sponsorship Development

The consultant will support sponsorship development for ILG's September anniversary fundraising event and awards reception in Sacramento.

Responsibilities may include:

- Developing a statewide sponsorship outreach strategy
- Identifying prospective sponsors connected to local government, civic leadership, infrastructure, sustainability, public engagement, technology, workforce, or related sectors
- Coordinating sponsor outreach and stewardship
- Tracking sponsorship commitments and deliverables
- Supporting sponsor recognition and benefit fulfillment

Potential sponsors may include:

- Corporate partners
- Philanthropic organizations
- Civic and public-sector aligned entities
- Utilities, consulting firms, infrastructure providers, financial institutions, and government service providers

3. Limited Event Logistics Support

Event logistics support is intended to complement the fundraising and partnership development work and is not expected to be the primary focus of this engagement.

The consultant may provide limited support for:

- Coordination with vendors and venue staff
- Event timeline and logistics management
- Registration coordination
- Day-of event support

ILG staff will provide on-site support and assist with overall event coordination and stakeholder management.

Expected Deliverables

Deliverables may include:

- Sponsorship prospect lists and outreach strategies
- Fundraising and partnership tracking pipelines
- Regular progress updates and status reports
- Sponsorship materials or refinement recommendations
- Partnership meeting coordination and follow-up
- Event sponsorship fulfillment tracking
- Event logistics coordination support, as needed

The selected consultant will be expected to provide regular progress updates, including sponsorship and partnership pipeline tracking and summaries of key activities and outcomes.

Desired Qualifications

Proposals should demonstrate:

- Proven success in fundraising, sponsorship development, business development, or strategic partnerships
- Experience working with nonprofit, civic, governmental, association, or public-sector audiences
- Strong relationship management and communication skills
- Experience supporting fundraising or stakeholder events
- Familiarity with California local government and civic-sector networks
- Ability to work collaboratively and strategically with nonprofit leadership and staff

Preference will be given to consultants with existing relationships or demonstrated experience working within California's local government, civic leadership, philanthropic, infrastructure, sustainability, or public-sector partner ecosystem.

Proposal Requirements

Proposals should include:

1. Consultant or Firm Overview

- Brief description of the consultant or firm
- Relevant experience and qualifications

2. Proposed Approach

- Description of fundraising and partnership development strategy
- Approach to sponsorship development and relationship management
- Description of any event logistics support capabilities

3. Relevant Experience

- Examples of prior fundraising, sponsorship, or partnership success stories
- Examples of similar projects or events
- Description of statewide or regional relationship networks, if applicable

4. Proposed Workplan

- High-level timeline and approach through September 2026

5. Capacity & Communication

- Estimated availability and capacity during the engagement period
- Proposed communication and reporting approach

6. Fee Proposal

- Proposed fee structure, including hourly, monthly retainer, milestone-based, or hybrid approaches
- Any optional services or additional costs should be clearly identified

We are open to retainer, hourly, milestone-based, or hybrid pricing models and are seeking a right-sized approach aligned with organizational goals and consultant experience.

We anticipate an active, hands-on engagement through September 2026.

We also anticipate a flexible engagement based on scope, experience, and proposed approach. Budget considerations will vary depending on the services proposed.

7. References

- Two to three professional references

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Demonstrated fundraising, sponsorship, or business development success
- Strength of statewide relationship networks and partnership strategy
- Relevant experience with nonprofit, civic, or public-sector audiences
- Creativity and overall strategic approach
- Communication and project management capacity
- Cost and overall value

Anticipated Timeline

- RFP Release Date: May 14, 2026
- Proposal Deadline: May 20, 2026
- Finalist Interviews/Discussions (if needed): Week of May 25, 2026
- Selection Notification: By June 1, 2026
- Anticipated Start Date: By June 11, 2026
- Anniversary Event: September 2026

Submission Instructions

Please submit proposals electronically to:

Allie Hunt, Institute for Local Government, ahunt@ca-ilg.org

Exact Subject Line: ILG Strategic Partnerships & Fundraising Proposal

Additional Information

We are scoping for an initial engagement through September 2026, with the potential for extension based on organizational needs, consultant performance, and funding availability.

Finalists may be invited to participate in interviews or discussions with ILG leadership.

Consultants should disclose any actual or potential conflicts of interest, including existing business relationships that may intersect with ILG partnerships, sponsors, or programmatic activities.

ILG reserves the right to:

- Accept or reject any proposal
- Request additional information or interviews
- Negotiate scope and fees
- Select the proposal that best aligns with ILG's organizational needs and priorities

We encourage proposals from individuals and firms with diverse backgrounds and perspectives.