

Extension Journal, Inc.

Request for Proposals

Due: January 15, 2015

Submit all proposals to:

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Extension Journal, Inc. seeks proposals for editorial oversight and practices for publication of the corporation's flagship product, the *Journal of Extension*. The *Journal of Extension (JOE)* creates opportunities for professionals and students to publish intellectual, creative work; nurtures and develops emerging scholars and new authors in the publication process; encourages professional development; and advances the theory and practice of the Cooperative Extension System.

JOE is a rigorous, peer-reviewed journal that brings the scholarship of university outreach and engagement to educators and practitioners around the world. Of the five types of submissions, three (Feature, Research in Brief, and Ideas at Work submissions) undergo double-blind review, while two (Commentary and Tools of the Trade submissions) are reviewed and evaluated solely by the editor. *JOE* is published online six times per year with approximately 36 articles per issue and in recent years has received between 280-325 submissions annually. The acceptance rate for *JOE* is currently 26.6%.

Extension Journal, Inc. (EJI) is seeking a five-year contract and will compensate the successful proposal applicant at an annual rate of \$81,500, paid twice per year through an invoice procedure. A three (3) percent increase, compounded annually for inflation, will be paid in years two, three, four and five of the contract. EJI reserves the right to negotiate with the successful proposal applicant to arrive at a mutually agreed upon contract that states the period of service

and the annual rate. EJI reserves the right to reject all proposals and to re-open the call if necessary. EJI does not pay facilities and administrative overhead on contracts or grants funded.

The purpose of this RFP is to identify interested institutions or independent contractors with capacity to deliver top quality service for the editing of the *Journal of Extension* as described herein.

Background and Requirements

Providing the most flexibility possible, EJI is open to contracting with a variety of entities (university or college communication units, academic journalism or communication departments, free-lance editors or emeritus faculty with editing expertise, etc.) as long as the standards for excellence can be met and capacity for the work can be proven.

Thus, suitable applicants may represent a Land Grant Institution or an independent contractor. It is expected that all applicants will be able to demonstrate the following:

- Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of the mission and values of the Land Grant University-based Cooperative Extension System
- Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of the mission and values of the *Journal of Extension*
- Supply appropriate technical and secretarial support for completing the tasks and service listed within the RFP
- Support collaboration between the Editor-in-Chief and the technical site, currently The Ohio State University, for the successful electronic publishing of *JOE*

Editor-in-Chief: One individual must be named within the proposal to assume this role and the individual's vita or resume included with the submission. All characteristics listed below are required unless otherwise stated.

- Master's degree required; PhD preferred
- Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of the mission and values of the Land Grant University-based Cooperative Extension System
- Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of the mission and values of the *Journal of Extension*
- Demonstrated understanding of scholarship (intellectual, creative work validated by peers)

and communicated beyond the university) required regardless of degree held

- Professional editing and copy-editing experience preferred
- Strong composition and writing skills; proficient with grammar and spelling
- Competent with Microsoft Word and able to master Manuscript FastTrack, *JOE's* online review system
- Confidence and ability to enforce the expectations of rigor and quality established for *JOE*
- Proven ability to provide professional development feedback to emerging authors and scholars, serving as a writing coach when needed
- Established record for producing timely and accurate reports of completed work, detailing inputs and outcomes

Copy Editor(s): Copy editing duties may be distributed within the work unit and supervised by the Editor-in-Chief, with no third party subcontracting acceptable.

- Professional editing experience preferred; copy editing background and ability to impose established *JOE* style (APA, with the exception of *JOE* citations)
- Strong composition and writing skills; proficient in grammar and spelling
- Competent with Microsoft Word and able to master Manuscript FastTrack, *JOE's* online review service
- Established record of meeting deadlines with error-free products

Expectations and Deliverables

Experience indicates that a minimum of .75 FTE is needed to accomplish the tasks and services described in the RFP; however, EJI would consider proposals with less FTE committed if efficiencies can be detailed in the submission.

Editor-in-Chief:

- Serve as an ex-officio member on the Extension Journal, Inc., Board of Directors, providing an editor's report at each board meeting (two face-to-face meetings annually and up to four virtual meetings per year)
- Carry out decisions of the Board
- Serve as an ex-officio member of the *JOE* Editorial Committee: work closely with the committee to maintain an active, qualified cohort of peer reviewers; set editorial policy and

- direction for *JOE*; and recommend best practices for *JOE*'s success to the board
- Update *JOE* Submission Guidelines, and add material to the Help for *JOE* Authors page as appropriate
 - Receive manuscripts and complete editorial review for all submissions, determine if manuscripts are acceptable for peer review or publication, depending on submission category
 - Provide instruction to authors of manuscripts accepted for peer review on uploading their manuscripts to Manuscript FastTrack, *JOE*'s online review system
 - Download manuscripts from Manuscript FastTrack to remove personal identifiers and upload manuscripts for blind peer review
 - Assign manuscripts to peer reviewers based on reviewers' self-identified areas of expertise; peer reviewers are evaluated and appointed based on a set of Board approved criteria
 - Synthesize reviewer feedback and inform authors of reviewers' decision, communicate with about revisions required before publication, and request copyright permissions when revisions are complete
 - Provide detailed editorial review to authors whose manuscripts are rejected, including feedback about revising and improving the manuscript for resubmission (*JOE* is committed to the professional development of emerging authors and scholars.)
 - Develop, propose and execute a production schedule, in conjunction/cooperation with the Web Developer, to assemble each issue of *JOE* and publish it online
 - Oversee copy editing of the 36 articles in each issue of *JOE* and send copy-edited articles to the Web Developer for posting/publication
 - Compose an Editor's Page for each issue
 - Proof each issue's online publication, sending any corrections and updated text to the Web Developer, before giving approval to go live
 - Establish a collegial and productive working relationship with Web Developer
 - Prepare a list of articles for each *JOE* issue, sorted by authors' state of origin, to send to the EJI board Past President for notification of state Extension Directors
 - Respond to questions, grant permissions for article use, oversee maintenance of the *JOE* tracking database, compile statistics like acceptance rate, perform various other services to the profession as appropriate to the role of Editor-in-Chief

Copy Editor(s):

- Check that authors have provided all required materials and information

- Identify and resolve style and text inconsistencies; impose the established *JOE* style (APA, with the exception of *JOE* citations)
- Correct spelling mistakes, grammatical errors, parallelism problems, etc.
- Ensure consistency in hyphenation, capitalization, formatting of references, etc.
- Ensure illustrations are correctly formatted, captioned, and cited in article text
- Maintain awareness of new terms or phrases coming into popular usage with a view to ensuring appropriateness for the readership
- Discuss and resolve any potentially libelous content with the Editor-in-Chief
- Code manuscripts for design features, such as hierarchy of headings, to instruct the production team
- Meet deadlines with error-free products

Contract relationships

Between Land Grant Institution and EJI:

- Appoint an editorial site representative, someone other than the Editor-in-Chief, to serve as a voting member on the EJI board of directors and as a liaison between EJI and editorial site
- Support the editorial site representative's time and expenses to fully participate in EJI board meetings (two face-to-face meetings annually and up to four virtual meetings per year)
- Supply appropriate technical and secretarial support for completing the tasks and services listed within the RFP

Between Independent Contractor and EJI:

- No editorial site representative will be appointed to the board
- Editor-in-Chief reports directly to the EJI Board of Directors' Editorial Committee Chair(s)
- Supply appropriate technical and secretarial support for completing the tasks and services listed within the RFP

Acquisition Schedule

Tasks	Dates	Who
Request for Proposal (RFP) posted	October 15, 2014	EJI President
Proposal submissions due	January 15, 2015	Search Committee Chair
Proposal submissions reviewed	February 15, 2015	Search Committee
Editor-in-Chief candidates interviewed (Atlanta, GA)	March 23-24, 2015	Search Committee plus current Editor and Web Developer
References checked. Institutions contacted, if not independent contractor	April 2015	Search Committee
Offer extended; contract negotiated and completed	May 2015	EJI Executive Committee
All applicants notified of status	June 2015	EJI Executive Committee
Contract award announced	July 1, 2015	EJI Board of Directors
Orientation/transition of new Editor-in-Chief and contracted tasks and services	TBD, as negotiated	EJI Board of Directors and current Editor
Contract begins	January 1, 2016	

Required Proposal Components

The proposal must be submitted via email no later than January 15, 2015, to (search committee chair) at (email address). The following information provides details about how proposals should be organized and assembled for review and evaluation.

1. A narrative description, not to exceed five (5) pages and labeled as Attachment #1 to the submission email, detailing:
 - Proposed Editor-in-Chief's experience and qualifications for completing the duties and tasks as described in the RFP
 - Institution or Independent Contractor's capacity for accepting and supporting the contract and why the institution or independent contractor would be an attractive option for EJI
 - The proposed structure and process to accomplish the expectations and deliverables in the RFP consistent with the mission, values and high production standards of the *Journal of Extension*.
2. Vita or resume for the proposed Editor-in-Chief (labeled as Attachment #2 to the submission email)
3. The name and contact information for three professional references who can speak to the abilities and experience of the proposed editor-in-chief to complete the duties and tasks as described in the RFP (labeled as Attachment #3 to the submission email)

Questions and Clarification

All questions or requests for clarification are to be sent via email to the search committee chair at **no later than January 5, 2015**. Responses to all questions and requests will be posted at www.joe.edu so others may benefit from the information.

Evaluation

Each proposal submitted will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding and appreciation of the mission and values of the Land Grant University-based Cooperative Extension System and the *Journal of Extension* (10%)

- Institution or Independent Contractor's capacity for accepting and supporting the contract (20%)
- Experience/Background of the proposed Editor-in-Chief (30%)
- Demonstrated capacity for editing, managing submissions, etc. (15%)
- Quality of proposal, including copy editing and meeting deadlines (15%)
- Demonstrated teamwork/communication skills (10%)

A subset of acceptable applicants will be selected for interview. The proposed Editor-in-Chief **may** be invited to interview with the search committee on March 23 or 24, 2015, in Atlanta, GA.