

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

## Media Buying Services



### SUSQUEHANNA AREA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY

ONE TERMINAL DRIVE, SUITE 300  
MIDDLETOWN, PA 17057

ISSUE DATE: October 16, 2023

DUE DATE: November 8, 2023

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## SECTION 1.00 – INVITATION

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

#### Media Buying Services

The Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority (SARAA), owner and operator of the Harrisburg International Airport (HIA), Capital City Airport (CXY) in New Cumberland, Gettysburg Regional Airport (GRA) in Adams County and Franklin County Regional Airport (FCRA) near Chambersburg, is seeking proposals from qualified firms wishing to provide media planning and buying service to promote current and future airline service from Harrisburg International Airport. Also, there will be occasional advertising programs to support special events and SARAA tenant services and initiatives.

This RFP is only available electronically; paper copies will not be available. Interested parties may download the Request for Proposals from the HIA website: <http://www.flyhia.com>. The document is titled “Media Buying Services”.

**Three (3)** copies and one electronic copy of sealed responses must be submitted to SARAA, Attn: Robert Leader, One Terminal Drive, Suite 300, Middletown, PA 17057 labeled “Media Buying Services”. SARAA reserves the right to accept, reject or make requests for new submissions at its sole discretion. All submissions must be received in the office at Harrisburg International Airport, One Terminal Drive, Suite 300, Middletown, PA 17057 prior to (12:00 pm on November 8, 2023.

## SECTION 2.00 – GENERAL INFORMATION

### **2.01 DEFINITIONS**

The following terms and definitions will apply throughout this Request for Submission

“Airport”	refers to or means the Harrisburg International Airport (HIA), Capital City Airport (CXY), Franklin County Regional Airport (FCRA), or Gettysburg Regional Airport (GRA)
“Agreement”	refers to the agreement executed with the successful Respondent to provide the services solicited pursuant to this RFP
“Authority”	refers to the Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority, owner, and operator the airports listed above
“DBE”	refers to or means Disadvantaged Business Enterprise
“Submission”	refers to or means a document submitted by Respondent(s) to be considered for the Agreement; the overall submission shall include Respondents’ required information (Section 3.05) including ATTACHMENT 1. Submission and Proposal are interchangeable terms.
“Respondent(s)”	refers to any company or organization submitting for the services requested in this RFP
“RFP”	refers to or means the Request for Proposal
“Proposal”	refers to or means a document submitted by Respondent(s) to be considered for the Agreement; the overall submission shall include Respondents’ required information

(Section 3.05) including Attachment 1.  
Proposal and Submission are  
interchangeable terms.

“Media Buying”

Refers to the process of planning, buying, billing, review, and analysis of paid advertising on behalf of the Authority or a based tenant or business partner.

## **2.02 INTRODUCTION**

The Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority, owner and operator of the Harrisburg International Airport in Middletown, Pennsylvania, Capital City Airport in New Cumberland, Gettysburg Regional Airport in Adams County and Franklin County Regional Airport (FCRA) near Chambersburg, seeks proposals from qualified firms wishing to provide media buying services. The enclosed documents provide instructions, background information, and the required forms from which Respondents are to develop their formal Submissions to the Airport. There is no expressed or implied obligation in these documents for SARAA to reimburse responding organizations for any expenses incurred in preparing Submissions in response to this RFP.

## **2.03 BACKGROUND**

The Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority (SARAA) is the owner and operator of a four-airport system anchored by Harrisburg International Airport. Annually, HIA serves about 1.3 million passengers while the airport system serves more than 80,000 aircraft takeoffs and landings.

Reaching busy and distracted consumers is becoming increasingly difficult as media habits change. The Airport Authority purchases advertising on behalf of our partners to promote flying from Harrisburg International Airport versus driving hours, to and from, larger airports. The Airport Authority does not need to purchase a significant amount of advertising as the total number of tickets sold throughout the central Pennsylvania region far exceeds the total number of airline seats for sale from the airport. However, advertising these services is necessary to change the future travel habits of business and leisure travelers as new flights are offered from HIA.

As a public agency, it is important that contract procurement services are periodically reviewed. SARAA currently has an expiring contract with a qualified media buying agency that serves as the authority’s exclusive media planning, buying, and billing resource. Required services are consumer research, media strategy, planning, negotiation and buying, delivery of creative assets to media partners, campaign tracking and optimization, management of the billing process and providing a post-buy analysis of each campaign.

The selected partner may also be asked to work with the airport business development department on business-to-business outreach to companies and organizations frequently traveling by air to help airport staff in the airline route development process.

SARAA does not have a creative agency of record and does not anticipate needing one soon. However, should any interested organization have an established relationship, or ongoing affiliation with a creative partner, it may be noted. This is not a requirement for the selected partner. Creative services would be used only on an on-call basis.

## **2.04 RFP COORDINATOR**

Upon release of this RFP, all communications concerning this request should be directed to the RFP Coordinator listed below, in writing. Any oral communication will be considered unofficial and nonbinding to the Authority. The Respondent should rely only on written statements issued by the RFP Coordinator.

Robert Leader  
Manager, Marketing and Digital Media  
Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority  
One Terminal Drive, Suite 300  
Middletown, PA 17057  
Email: [Robert.Leader@saraa.org](mailto:Robert.Leader@saraa.org)

## **2.05 RFP SCHEDULE**

**The Authority anticipates the following schedule, which is subject to change**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>
October 16, 2023		Issuance of RFP
November 3, 2023	10 a.m. EDT	Deadline for Submission of Written Questions to SARAA
November 6, 2023		SARAA Releases Responses to Questions
November 8, 2023	12 p.m. EST	Submissions Due to SARAA
November 13, 2023		Evaluation of RFP Submissions and selection of Short List
November 14 - 17, 2023		Interviews (if necessary)
November 24, 2023		Recommendation to SARAA Board
December 6, 2023		SARAA Board meeting – awarding of agreement
January 2, 2024		Agreement begins

## **2.06 QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RFP**

Requests for clarification or additional information must be made in writing to the RFP Coordinator prior to the date specified in the RFP Schedule. Responses to all requests will be available on the Airport's website on the Release date. The RFP Coordinator will be unable to respond to requests for additional information or clarification received after 10:00 am EDT on November 3, 2023.

## **2.07 RFP AMENDMENTS**

All amendments to this RFP will be posted to the Airport's website ([www.FlyHIA.com](http://www.FlyHIA.com)). If deemed necessary by the Authority, Respondents will be given an opportunity to modify their Submission in the specific areas that are affected by the modification.

## **2.08 SUBMISSIONS**

Each Respondent must provide three (3) copies of their Submission. In addition, one electronic copy of the Submission and any supporting documentation (PDF) must be submitted on a USB flash drive. The complete package must be submitted in a sealed envelope, clearly identified as "Media Buying Services". The Submissions may be mailed or delivered to:

Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority  
Attn: Robert Leader  
One Terminal Drive, Suite 300  
Middletown, PA 17057

Respondents accept all risk of late delivery of mailed Submissions regardless of fault. Facsimile and other electronically transmitted submissions will not be considered. All Submissions and accompanying documentation become the property of the Authority and will not be returned.

## **2.09 TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

A. The Authority reserves the right to issue amendments to the RFP at any time. The Authority also reserves the right to cancel or reissue the RFP, to reject any or all Submissions, to waive any irregularities or informalities in the selection process, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items. The Authority reserves the right to request clarification of information from any Respondent or to request supplemental material deemed necessary to assist in the evaluation of the Submission. This RFP does not obligate the Authority to make any award or enter into any agreement as the result of any Submissions.

B. The Authority will not reimburse any Respondent for any of the costs involved in the preparation and submission of responses to this RFP or in the preparation for and attendance at subsequent interviews.

C. Respondents shall thoroughly examine and be familiar with this RFP. The failure or omission of any Respondent to receive or examine this document shall in no way relieve any Respondent of obligations with respect to this Submission or any subsequent Agreement.



## **SECTION 3.00 – SCOPE**

### **3.01 OVERVIEW**

The Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority (SARAA) issues this Request for Proposal (RFP) to partner with a media buying agency that understands the changing media landscape, has access to data-based research tools to guide strategic media thinking, has a demonstrated ability to plan, execute and review the effectiveness of media campaigns. The goal of this partnership is to increase awareness and use of Harrisburg International Airport (HIA) and its general aviation airport system.

### **3.02 RFP REQUIREMENTS**

SARAA will identify the most qualified organization based on the response to the following criteria:

- 1) Qualifications and capabilities of each respondent
- 2) Media Buying Experience
- 3) Sample Media Campaigns
- 4) Agency Fees for services provided (Must be submitted separately from proposal)

### **3.03 SUCCESSFUL RESPONDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responses will be evaluated as follows:

- 1) To understand your qualifications and capabilities, please provide:
  - a. A brief history and description of your organization and its services.
  - b. A list of key organization contacts, their capabilities and experience. Also, identify who will be the airport's primary day-to-day point of contact.
  - c. An overview of your market research capabilities, and any third-party data providers used, to analyze consumer behavior related to travel and tourism.
  - d. An overview of how your organization determines which types of media will be most effective for a client's campaign. Please explain who does the actual planning work—do you use in-house staff, or do you contract with another

partner? If using another partner, please identify and explain how that process is managed.

- e. A brief description of your organization's perception of Harrisburg International Airport and its brand. Be sure to identify the airport's strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for growth. Also, are you aware of any advertising campaigns related to HIA over the past twelve months?
- f. An overview of any experience your organization has with clients in the airport, airline, or travel industry.
- g. Do you have any unique corporate, community or travel related contacts that might be interested in working with airport staff on future air route development initiatives?

2) To understand your Media Buying Experience, please provide:

- a. A brief overview and example of your organization's media buying experience within the H-L-L-Y market.
- b. A brief overview and example of your organization's media buying experience within the HIA secondary market area.
- c. A brief overview and example of any experience buying media in market(s) outside of the state of PA.
- d. A brief description of how your organization's media buys are analyzed and measured for effectiveness, efficiency and return on investment.

3) Sample Media Campaign(s)

- a. A media plan for a hypothetical new route to a leisure destination. See item 3.06.
- b. A media plan for a hypothetical new route to a business destination. See item 3.07.

4) Agency Fees (To be placed in a separate sealed envelope and as a separate file on the Flash drive)

- a. Outline of Agency Fees.
- b. If selected, will your organization, when traveling for business purposes, commit to flying from Harrisburg International Airport? Yes or No.

### 3.04 HIA AIRPORT OVERVIEW AND CATCHMENT AREA

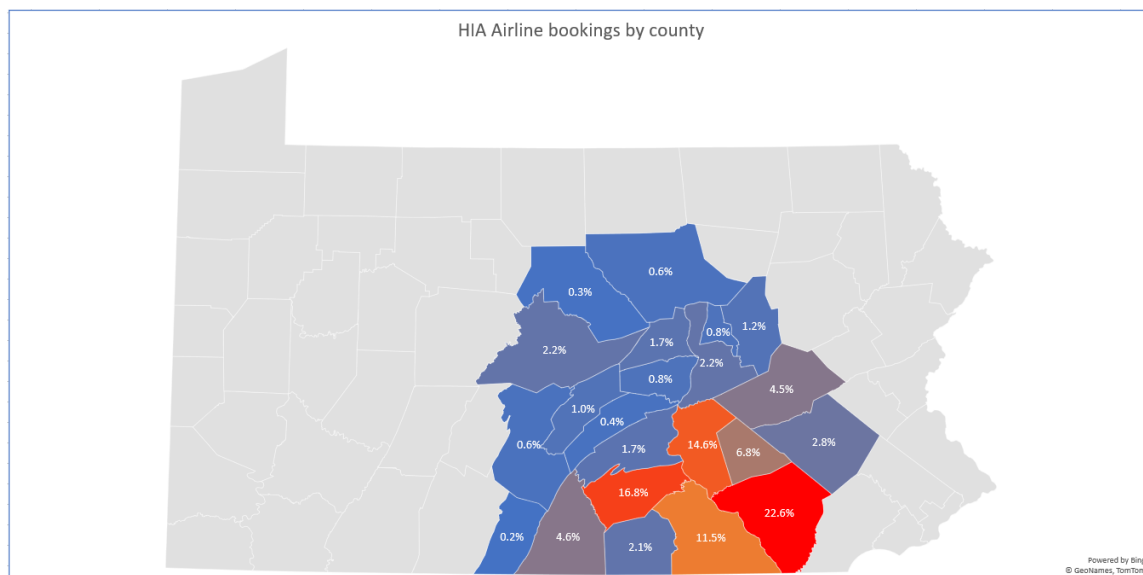
SARAA’s mission is to provide safe, convenient, and affordable airports to connect Central Pennsylvania to the world. Our recently updated Vision is for More Flights, to More Places, More Often.

HIA set a passenger traffic record in 2019 as more than 1.5 million people used the airport. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, in 2020, passenger traffic plunged to just 633,000. Since 2021, airline service and passenger traffic has been recovering toward 2019 levels. 2023 traffic is projected to be near 1.3 million.

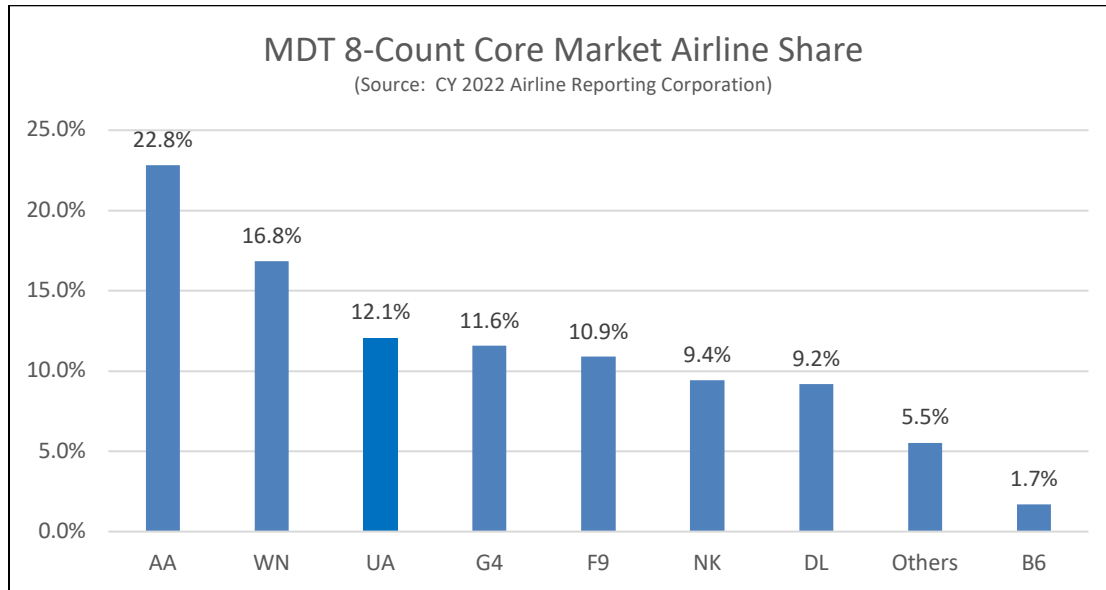
Travelers departing HIA, and living in Pennsylvania, originate throughout a 24-county region in Central Pennsylvania. This region—the airport’s catchment area—contains our primary and secondary service areas.

The airport’s primary service area—generating about 80 percent of HIA’s Pennsylvania based departing passengers—is the eight-county region surrounding the airport. This one-hour drive region is comprised of Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Perry, and York Counties. This region is where a large majority of the airport’s advertising initiatives are conducted.

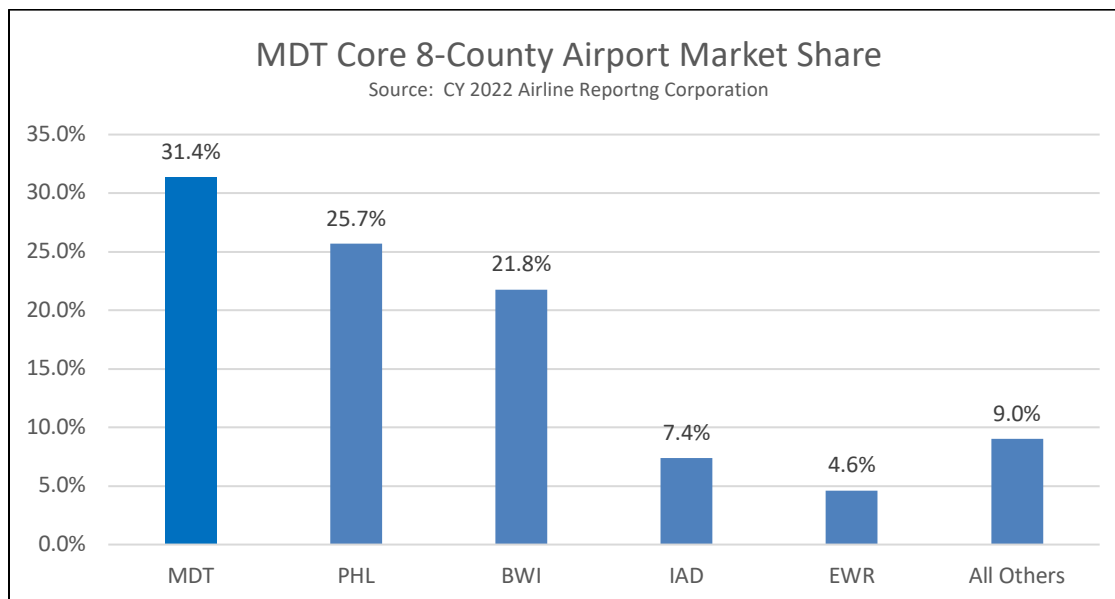
A 16-county secondary market—mostly located within a two-hour drive of the airport—generates nearly 20 percent of HIA’s Pennsylvania based departing passengers. Traffic from throughout this region has continued to increase since the pandemic. Some advertising campaigns are conducted in this region depending on the airline and route being promoted.



In 2022, American Airlines was the region's most booked airline followed by Southwest, United, Allegiant and Frontier.



While HIA (FAA code: MDT) is the region's most booked airport, due to the proximity of larger airports in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington DC, less than one in three passengers chooses Harrisburg.



### 3.05 ADVERTISING BUDGET

Airports do not set airfares, schedule flights, determine flight times, nor do they choose nonstop destinations. While airports try and influence these items, airlines are for profit companies that make these decisions on a supply and demand basis. Everyday there are more airline tickets sold throughout central Pennsylvania than can be served by the current flight schedule at HIA. As a result, HIA advertises only when new flight options or services are made available—or if a certain route(s) is determined to need additional marketing support.

Over the past two years, SARAA has invested approximately \$500,000 in actual media purchases (number below does not include agency fees):

2024: \$300,000 (proposed budget)

2023: \$270,000

2022: \$232,000

Please note: Should an unexpected opportunity arise where more marketing dollars are needed, the airport's marketing department has been able to justify increased spending above budgeted levels.

### **3.06 SAMPLE MEDIA PLAN REQUEST 1 – LEISURE DESTINATION FOCUS**

**Campaign Objective:** Sell airline tickets on airline X over a 90-day period from HIA’s primary and secondary markets from Harrisburg to Las Vegas, Nevada. Hypothetical service to start on March 1, 2024.

For the plan, based on available research, Respondent must define a target audience, create a proposed media plan—including recommended media partners and a rationale for why they were chosen, how the media plan will be monitored and optimized throughout the campaign, and after completion, how the plan will be reviewed for effectiveness.

Also, please include a normal agency timeline for the planning and execution process including research, planning, placement, campaign dates, reconciliation, billing, review, and analysis.

Respondent can assume any kind of creative asset needed is available for the proposed campaign. Sample creative is not required for this RFP response.

Budget: \$100,000

### **3.07 SAMPLE MEDIA PLAN REQUEST 2 – BUSINESS DESTINATION FOCUS**

**Campaign Objective:** Sell airline tickets on airline X over a 90-day period from HIA’s primary market area from Harrisburg to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Hypothetical service to start on June 6, 2024.

For the plan, based on available research, Respondent must define a target audience, create a proposed media plan—including recommended media partners and a rationale for why they were chosen, how the media plan will be monitored and optimized throughout the campaign, and after completion, how the plan will be reviewed for effectiveness.

Also, please include a normal agency timeline for the planning and execution process including research, planning, placement, campaign dates, reconciliation, billing, review, and analysis.

Respondent can assume any kind of creative asset needed is available for the proposed campaign. Sample creative is not required for this RFP response

Budget: \$50,000

## SECTION 4.00 – REQUIREMENTS

### **4.01 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Submissions should be limited to twenty (20) pages or less and be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight-forward, concise description of Respondent capabilities to satisfy the requirements of this request. Emphasis should be placed on completeness and clarity of content. All Submission must be in the following format:

1. Cover Letter / Executive Summary
2. Table of Contents
3. Explanation of Qualifications and Capabilities
4. Explanation of Media Buying Experience
5. Sample Media plans
6. Agency Fees
7. References
8. RFP Acknowledgment Form (Attachment 1)

Respondent's Submission shall include the following items in in the following sequence:

- 1. COVER LETTER/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** (not included in 20-page limit)  
Summarize the firm's background and staff qualifications and expertise.
- 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS** (not included in 20-page limit)  
The contents of the Submission shall be included in an index at the beginning of the Submission and should include all contents and attachments.
- 3. QUALIFICATIONS AND CAPABILITIES**  
Provide a detailed review of your organization, its capabilities, and responses to item 3.03 section 1, items a – g.
- 4. MEDIA BUYING EXPERIENCE**  
Provide a detailed review of your Media Buying Experience and responses to item 3.04 section 2, items a – d.
- 5. SAMPLE MEDIA CAMPAIGNS**  
Provide detailed media plans for item 3.06, and item 3.07.
- 6. FEES \* AND HIA TRAVEL COMMITMENT** (not included in 20-page limit)  
Provide details of all agency fees for services provided and response to agency business travel inquiry. Must be presented as specified in item 3.03 section 4, items a and b.

\* Please make sure this section is SEALED AND SEPARATE from the rest of the proposal.

**7. REFERENCES** (not included in 20-page limit)

Provide three (3) client references, which the Respondent has served over the past two years and/or is currently serving. Provide a contact person, telephone number, and email address for each reference.

**8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

All Submissions must include a completed copy of the RFP Acknowledgement Form found in *Attachment 1*.

Respondent is expected to examine this RFP carefully, understand the terms and conditions for providing the services listed herein and respond completely. FAILURE TO COMPLETE AND PROVIDE ANY OF THESE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS MAY RESULT IN THE RESPONDENT'S SUBMISSION BEING DISQUALIFIED FROM CONSIDERATION.



## **4.02 SUBMISSIONS**

- A. Respondent shall submit three (3) copies of the Submission and one USB flash drive containing a copy of the Submission in Adobe PDF format in a sealed package, clearly marked on the front of the package "Media Buying Services".
- B. All Submissions must be received by the Airport no later than 12:00 p.m. EST on November 8, 2023, at the address below. Submissions received prior to the above time and date may be modified provided such modifications are sealed and received by the Airport prior to the deadline of Submissions. Any Submission or modification received after this time shall not be considered, and will be returned, unopened to the Respondent. It is recommended that Respondents submit early to avoid the possibility of rejection for late arrival.

Mailing Address:

Robert Leader  
Manager, Marketing and Digital Media  
Harrisburg International Airport  
One Terminal Drive, Suite 300  
Middletown, PA 17057

SUBMISSIONS SENT BY FAX OR EMAIL WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

- C. All Submissions become the property of SARAA/Harrisburg International Airport upon receipt and will not be returned. Any information deemed to be confidential by the Respondent should be clearly noted on the page(s) where confidential information is contained. However, SARAA cannot guarantee that it will not be compelled to disclose all, or part of any information submitted, since information deemed to be confidential by Respondent may not be considered confidential under Pennsylvania law, or pursuant to a Court order.
- D. Any cost or expense incurred by the Respondent that is associated with the preparation of the Submission, the Pre-Submittal conference, if any is held, or during any phase of the selection process, shall be borne solely by the Respondent.

## **4.03 SBE/DBE**

The Authority is committed to promoting the development of small business enterprises (SBE) and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBE) in this area. All SBE and DBE are encouraged to participate in the RFP process and the Authority agrees to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended.

#### **4.04 COMMUNICATION**

All communications pertaining to this RFP, or the process, should be directed in writing to:

Robert Leader  
Manager, Marketing and Digital Media  
Harrisburg International Airport  
One Terminal Drive, Suite 300  
Middletown, PA 17057

Email: [Robert.Leader@saraa.org](mailto:Robert.Leader@saraa.org)

Inquiries shall be limited to the contents of and Submissions for this RFP. All responses to inquiries will be posted in the form of an Addendum to the RFP on the Airport's website ([www.FlyHIA.com](http://www.FlyHIA.com)).

## SECTION 5.00 – POST SUBMITTAL EVENTS

### 5.01 EVALUATION OF SUBMISSIONS

Each timely Submission will be evaluated to determine overall responsiveness and qualifications under the RFP. Criteria to be evaluated will include, but not be limited to, the items listed below. The selection committee may select all, some, or none of the Respondents for interviews. SARAA may also request additional information from Respondents at any time prior to the final approval of a selected Respondent. SARAA reserves the right to select one, or more, or none of the Respondents to provide services. Final approval of a selected Respondent is subject to the action of the SARAA Board of Directors.

### 5.02 EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criterion	Percentage
<i>Qualifications and Capabilities</i>	20%
<i>Media Buying Experience</i>	20%
<i>Sample Media Campaigns</i>	50 %
<i>Cost</i>	10%

### 5.03 EVALUATION PROCESS

Once all submissions are received, the evaluation process will include several steps to determine the preferred Respondent. Those steps are described below.

1. **Short list** – Based upon the responses to the RFP, the selection committee will compile a pre-selection short list of the best-qualified Respondents. The committee will notify those Respondents not qualified for the short-list that they will not be considered.
2. **Interviews** – Following receipt of Proposals and compilation of a short-list, the selection committee may engage in interviews with each Respondent on the pre-selection short list that timely submits a Proposal. The selection committee may, in its discretion, omit interviews and rely solely on the submitted materials.
3. **Ranking and Selection** – Based upon the information supplied, and after applying the selection criteria above, the selection committee will rank the Respondents in order of

preference and begin negotiating final contract terms with the first-ranked Respondent. If unsuccessful in negotiating mutually acceptable terms with the first-ranked Respondent, the selection committee may move to the second-ranked Respondent and repeat such process until mutually acceptable terms are reached with a Respondent or the selection committee determines that it would be in SARAA's best interest to either terminate or recommence the process.

4. **Approval** –If a Respondent is selected, the Respondent will be recommended for approval by the SARAA Board. If approved, a contract will be awarded on the terms negotiated.

#### **5.04 NOTICE OF ACCEPTANCE**

Upon the Authority's selection of a Respondent, the selected Respondent will be notified by telephone, then certified mail, return receipt requested, of the selection to commence negotiations of an Agreement to provide Media Buying Services.

**Susquehanna Area Regional Airport Authority**  
**Media Buying Services**  
**RFP Acknowledgement Form**

Recipients of the Authority's Request for Proposal for Media Buying Services should complete this form and return as directed below to ensure the Authority has the recipient's correct contact information. Responses to vendor questions issued by the Authority on November 3, 2023, will be posted on our website, [www.FlyHIA.com](http://www.FlyHIA.com).

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed RFP Acknowledgement Form to:

SARAA

Attn: Robert Leader

One Terminal Drive, Suite 300

Middletown, Pennsylvania 17057