

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
Speaker Consultant Services
2026**

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is seeking proposals from qualified firms or an individual skilled at providing public speaking coaching for professionals in high profile and TED-talk type environments.

An individual or firm will assist the Atlanta Regional Commission's Chief Executive Officer, ARC staff, and other special partners in enhancing the impact, clarity, presence, and content for public addresses. There is a particular need to support two scheduled segments that will occur as a part of the State of the Region event on **Wednesday, November 4, 2026**. They are:

1. **State of the Region Address:** A data-driven, authoritative address to business, government, and community leaders on regional challenges and progress. The success proposers will support ARC's Chief Executive Officer in developing confident speech delivery, an authentic connection with audiences, and language that resonates with audience and aligns with the agency's mission.
 - **Length:** 15-20 minutes
2. **What's Next ATL Speaker Series:** Short, forward-looking, thought-leadership presentation aimed at inspiring action and collaboration around specific issues or opportunities within the region.
 - **Length:** 5-7 minutes (2 speakers)

The contract may be amended to add additional public speaking coaching services for ARC leadership staff.

ARC anticipates that a contractor will be selected in late July and work will begin in August 2026. All work for CY 2026 activities must be completed by December 31, 2026.

Specific timelines and deliverables can be found in **Exhibit A – Scope of Services**.

I. Agency Overview and Service Requirement(s)

The Atlanta Regional Commission has served as the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for the region since 1947. The agency serves as a regional convener, bringing together diverse stakeholders to address the most important issues facing the 11-county metro Atlanta. ARC's member governments are Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale counties, and the city of Atlanta.

For more than 30 years, the Atlanta Regional Commission has held a State of the Region (SOR) event, gathering elected and appointed officials, civic, business, and nonprofit leaders to discuss key issues impacting the Atlanta region. This year the event will be at the Georgia World Congress Center in the Thomas Murphy Ballroom on **Wednesday, November 4, 2026** with an attendance of approximately 1,500.

Live and hybrid events such as ARC's keystone State of Region event continue to be important means of informing, educating, engaging, and inspiring our stakeholders and partners around the key issues facing the Atlanta region. Delivering concise and meaningful messages is crucial to the success of these programs. In recent years, ARC has relied on professional support to help craft messaging and coach individuals in delivery of content.

II. Proposal Guidelines and Electronic Submission Requirements

All proposals must be submitted electronically through the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) procurement website. Proposal submitted by any other method (including email, mail, fax, or hand delivery) may not be accepted.

Respondents must register and complete the application on the ARC procurement website to submit a proposal. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure successful registration and timely submission.

Proposals must be received no later than **9:00 a.m. EST on Monday, July 27, 2026**. The procurement system will automatically record the date and submission time. Late proposals will not be accepted under any circumstances.

The Respondent(s) is solely responsible for:

- Uploading all required documents;
- Verifying that files are complete, readable, and properly labeled; and
- Ensuring submission is finalized prior to the deadline.
- Only one proposal containing all required information may be uploaded per responder (the system will only submit the latest uploaded).

ARC is not responsible for technical difficulties, internet outages, user errors, or system delays experienced by the respondent. Respondents are strongly encouraged to submit proposals well in advance of the deadline.

Upon successful submission, the system will provide email confirmation. This confirmation serves as proof of receipt.

Questions Regarding Solicitation

All questions concerning this RFP must be submitted electronically through the procurement website by **5:00 p.m. EST on Thursday, July 16, 2026**. Questions submitted after this deadline or through any other means will not be considered.

To ensure fairness and transparency, respondents are prohibited from contacting ARC staff, board members, or consultants regarding this solicitation outside of the formal Q & A process.

Response to Questions

Official responses to all timely submitted questions will be posted on the procurement website as a written addendum by **5:00 p.m. EST Monday, June 20, 2026**. Only written responses issued through the website shall be considered official and binding.

It is the responsibility of each respondent to regularly check the procurement website for addenda, clarifications, and updates. Failure to review posted addenda shall not relieve a respondent from compliance with any requirements of the RFP.

RFPs and responses can be found on the ARC's website:

<https://atlantaregional.org/aboutarc/procurements/>

Proposal Contents

Proposals shall not exceed a total of 30 pages (8.5 x 11) inclusive of resumes and firm experience. Covers, end sheets, budget exhibits, and an introductory letter shall not count against this maximum.

Proposals must include the following information:

- A. Company Background and Staffing: Include company's legal name, mailing address, email address, phone, primary point of contact, biographies of key staff members, listing of other staff, qualifications, etc.
- B. Project Approach: Provide an overview methodology for executive speech coaching.
- C. A Sampling of Previous Support: Include overviews of your company's last 5 projects of a similar scope. Please elaborate on specific services your firm provided.
- D. Cost Proposal:
 - 1. Proposals must include a detailed budget. All fees should be showcased as line items as outline in Exhibit B.
 - 2. Showcasing your services before ARC's esteemed stakeholders, can potentially bring new business to your company. Consideration will be given to any firm that includes complimentary services or reduced fees, in exchange for recognition, introductions and exposure.
- E. References: Include no less than 3 previous client references within the last 5 years (with current contact information) who can attest to the quality of your company's work.

IV. Proposal Evaluation

Submissions will initially be evaluated based upon the written proposals. Should the Review Committee choose to interview finalists, a “short list” of firms will be selected from the proposals received. ARC reserves the right to award this contract based on initial proposals received without formal interviews. ARC reserves the right to award all or part of the available funds for this project.

The review of written proposals will be based on the following evaluation criteria, with the relative weights in parentheses:

- A. Related experience, staffing, and qualifications (40%)
- B. Project approach and management philosophy including work plan and scheduling.
Note: This includes the consultant’s ability to demonstrate a balanced workload in order to carry out its responsibilities to ARC in relationship with any other contracts the consultant may have. (30%)
- C. Proposed budget (15%)
- D. References of the firm or project team (15%)

VI. Terms and Conditions

ARC reserves the right to award this contract or contracts based on initial proposals received without formal interviews. ARC reserves the right to select for contract or for negotiations a proposal other than that with the lowest cost, reject any and all proposals or to make no award, and to waive minor irregularities in any proposal. ARC reserves the right to request clarification of information submitted and to request additional information from any proposer, and to negotiate any aspect of the proposal with any proposer and negotiate with more than one proposer at the same time.

ARC reserves the right to award any contract to the next most qualified contractor if the successful contractor does not execute a contract within thirty (30) days after the award of the proposal. The contract resulting from acceptance of a proposal by ARC shall be in a form supplied or approved by ARC and shall reflect the specifications in this RFP.

This contract may be amended and extended for up to four (4) consecutive years depending upon performance and funding availability.

Exhibit A

SCOPE OF SERVICES

General: The work to be accomplished by the Consultant is in support of the following ARC Cost Center:

<u>Cost Center No.</u>	<u>Cost Center Title</u>
623AN	External Affairs Enterprise

I. Purpose:

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is seeking proposals from speakers and speech coaches experienced in high level events.

The firm will assist the Atlanta Regional Commission's CEO in enhancing the impact, clarity, executive presence for major public addresses, with a focus on two key annual events: State of the Region and What's Next ATL.

II. Study Area

Events in the Atlanta metropolitan area.

III. Work and Services

An individual or firm will assist the Atlanta Regional Commission's Chief Executive Officer, ARC staff, and other special partners in enhancing the impact, clarity, presence, and content for public addresses.

Consulting services should include, but not limited to:

- Assisting in structuring speeches for maximum narrative flow and impact.
- Help refining key messages and translate technical planning concepts into accessible, persuasive language.
- Develop compelling openings/closes and memorable soundbites.
- Material review and input on slide decks/visuals.
- One-on-one rehearsal and coaching on vocal variety, pace, pausing, and physical appearance.
- Work on audience engagement, including Q&A handling if required.
- Providing feedback on gestures, eye contact, and use of stage/podium.
- Meeting 1-on-1, and virtually if necessary, with the presenters to prepare.

The selected Consultant must have a proven track record of:

- Coaching C-Suite Executives: Documented experience in one-on-one coaching of CEO's Presidents' or similarly high-level leaders in mission-driven organizations with a focus on elevating their leadership voice.
- Translating Complex Subject Matter: Expertise in helping executives distill complex, technical, or data-heavy information into clear, compelling, and audience-accessible narratives without sacrificing accuracy or nuance.

- **Preparing for High Stakes Public Addresses:** A portfolio of preparing leaders for flagship, annual events, where the speech is the central platform for organizational vision and authority.
- **Adapting Tone for Distinct Audiences:** Evidence of tailoring a speaker's delivery and content for different purposes
- **Enhancing Executive Presence:** A methodology for coaching on non-verbal communication, stage management, vocal power, and audience rapport that builds gravitas and trust in a public forum.

For more than 30 years, the Atlanta Regional Commission has held a State of the Region (SOR) event, gathering elected and appointed officials, civic, business, and nonprofit leaders to discuss key issues impacting the Atlanta region. This year, the event will be at the Georgia World Congress Center in the Thomas Murphy Ballroom on Wednesday, November 4, 2026. We anticipate an attendance of approximately 1,500 individuals.

Live events such as ARC's keystone State of Region event continue to be important means of informing, educating, engaging, and inspiring our stakeholders and partners around the key issues facing the Atlanta region. Delivering concise and meaningful messages is crucial to the success of these programs. In recent years, ARC has relied on professional support to help craft messaging and coach individuals in delivery of content.

There is a particular need to support two key engagements that will occur as a part of the State of the Region event on Wednesday, November 4, 2026. The segments and their unique requirements follow:

- A. **State of the Region Address:** This is a data-driven, authoritative address to business, government, and community leaders on regional challenges and progress, delivered by ARC's Executive Director and CEO. **Length:** 10-20 minutes.

Content Development

- Work with ARC communications staff to frame the speech in a way that amplifies agency messaging and event themes and highlight key initiatives and successes of the past year. The initial draft will be prepared by ARC staff in consultation with the selected vendor.
- Refine the speech, including reviewing and editing content and coordinating visual elements to be included in the speech.

Presentation

- Speech coaching and delivery of up to three sessions with Executive Director & CEO in the month prior to event to refine content and delivery. Each session will be about 60-90 minutes in length and may be combination of virtual and in-person.
- On-site rehearsal and coaching on Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

- B. **What's Next ATL Speaker Series:** Short, forward-looking, thought-leadership presentation aimed at inspiring action and collaboration around specific issues or opportunities within the region. These Ted Talk type presentations are completely rehearsed and delivered without notes or teleprompter. Presenters are community leaders who may not have had the experience of speaking to such a large and influential audience in the past. **Length:** 5-7 each (2 speakers).
- Work with senior External Affairs staff to develop timeline for initial and ongoing engagement with speakers.
 - Provide 4-6 coaching sessions with each of the two 'What's Next ATL' speakers to help prepare content and practice delivery. Each session will be about an hour in length and may be combination of virtual and in-person.
 - On-site rehearsal and coaching on Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025.
- C. **Additional speech coach services** for ARC staff might be required throughout the calendar year which would require a contract amendment.

IV. DELIVERABLES

1. A compelling State of the Region address script, working in collaboration with ARC staff.
2. Fully prepare ARC Executive Director & CEO to deliver State of the Region address.
3. Compelling What's Next ATL scripts, working in collaboration with the two What's Next ATL speakers.
4. Fully prepare What's Next ATL speakers to deliver their speeches.

EXHIBIT B
PROPOSED PROJECT BUDGET

1. Direct Labor

Estimated Hours Rate/Hour Total Est. Cost

List by position all professional personnel participating in project

Total Direct Labor \$_____

2. Direct Costs or Services

List other items and basis for computing cost for each. Examples include computer services, equipment, etc.

Total Other Direct Costs \$_____

3. Subcontracts (*if applicable*)

For each, list identity, purpose and rate

Total Subcontracts \$_____