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Nonprofit Creative RFP Checklist

A Practical Guide to Choosing the Right Nonprofit Marketing Agency

Hiring a nonprofit creative agency is a big decision. This checklist helps you clarify your goals and evaluate partners with confidence.

Part 1: Internal Clarity Before You Issue an RFP

Before reaching out to agencies, confirm:

- ☐ We are clear on our primary objective
- ☐ We have defined measurable success metrics
- ☐ We understand our target audiences
- ☐ Our leadership team is aligned on goals
- ☐ We have a realistic budget range
- ☐ We have internal capacity for feedback and approvals
- ☐ We know what is driving this project right now

If you cannot check most of these, pause. Clarity internally will save time and money externally.

Part 2: Evaluating a Nonprofit Creative Agency

When reviewing proposals, ask:

- ☐ Did they tailor the proposal specifically to our organization?
- ☐ Do they demonstrate experience with nonprofit marketing?
- ☐ Do they connect branding and website work to fundraising outcomes?
- ☐ Did they ask thoughtful, strategic questions?
- ☐ Is their process clearly outlined?

- ☐ Do they define how success will be measured?
- ☐ Do they explain how they handle stakeholder input and board dynamics?

You are not just hiring for deliverables. You are hiring for thinking.

Part 3: Website and Branding Alignment Check

If this project involves nonprofit branding or a website redesign, confirm:

- ☐ Messaging is clear and audience specific
- ☐ Calls to action are simple and visible
- ☐ Donation pathways are friction free
- ☐ Impact stories are easy to find
- ☐ The brand reflects mission and values

Your nonprofit website should build trust within seconds.

Part 4: Red Flags to Watch For

Be cautious if:

- ☐ The proposal focuses mostly on visuals
- ☐ They cannot clearly explain their strategy
- ☐ They promise unrealistic results
- ☐ They avoid talking about measurement
- ☐ They treat the relationship as transactional
- ☐ They seem unfamiliar with nonprofit fundraising cycles

Creative misalignment is expensive. Trust your instincts.

Part 5: Partnership Fit

Ask yourself:

- ☐ Do we feel heard?
- ☐ Do they understand our mission?
- ☐ Would we feel comfortable having honest conversations?
- ☐ Do they feel like a long term partner?

Alignment matters more than hype.

If you would like to talk through your nonprofit marketing goals before issuing your RFP, we are always happy to have a conversation.

Mission driven work deserves thoughtful strategy.