

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

CONTACT: Leslie Mead – mead@ace.coop  
ACE, PO Box 64047, St. Paul, MN 55164  
703/578-1820, 651/355-5073

DATE: May 10, 2008

### **Objective**

ACE is looking for an organization to manage the association on a contract basis.

### **Background**

The Association of Cooperative Educators is a U.S. non-profit, tax-exempt membership organization that brings together educators, researchers, cooperative members, and cooperative developers from across cooperative sectors and national borders. The resulting cross-pollination of ideas enhances cooperative development, strengthens cooperatives, promotes professionalism and improves public understanding. ACE members come from across the globe with the majority of the membership residing in Canada, Puerto Rico and the United States.

### **Vision**

To strengthen cooperatives and the cooperative movement by promoting innovative educational responses to social and economic changes.

### **Mission**

To provide members a forum to highlight programs and practices that increase understanding, innovation and professionalism in cooperative education.

Ace benefits cooperative education and the cooperative movement by:  
Promoting cooperative research  
Developing linkages between universities, cooperatives and supporting organizations

Building capacity to support the development of innovation and acumen in cooperatives

Spreading the word by providing resources on cooperative education

### **Current ACE Management**

ACE is currently managed under an agreement with The Cooperative Foundation. Under this agreement, The Cooperative Foundation provides the organization the services of an executive administrator, membership coordinator and administrative support such as bookkeeping and accounting. ACE also contracts work on the ACE Newsletter, website content and updating, and Institute coordination. Website development, newsletter design and translation are also outsourced.

ACE currently operates on an annual budget of about \$140,000 per year, based on direct membership fees, sponsorships, institute registrations and grant funding. Of that budget, \$72,000 is dedicated to administration and professional expenses (excluding graphic design web support and translation)

ACE currently has 250 members.

The ACE board periodically reviews and revises its strategic plan. A copy of the most recent plan is attached as well as the organization's promise hierarchy.

The ACE board hopes to engage with a new contractor for ACE management in the late summer of 2008 and hopes to have the new contractor attend this year's board meeting and Institute on July 29 to August 1 in Ottawa, Ontario.

### **Service requested**

The board of directors of ACE would like to engage an organization, on a contract basis, to oversee the administration of ACE. The organization may

perform the needed services in house or contract for these services with other organizations. Services needed include the following tasks:

## **I. Membership Development and Retention**

Responsible for developing and implementing membership plan to increase ACE membership throughout the Americas for the purpose of enhancing cooperative education through an expanded network of cooperative educators.

Promote ACE membership

Handle membership inquiries and renewals

Correspondence with members

Create and enforce policies consistent with ACE's policies

Develop membership brochures and information as needed

Develop prospective membership list

Manage ACE data base

## **II. Communications**

Responsible for developing and implementing a three-language (English, French and Spanish) communication plan for ACE targeted at members, cooperatives and cooperative supporting organizations for the purpose of promoting innovations in cooperative education and ACE as an organization.

### Press Releases

Establish and maintain a list of cooperative press and organizational contacts for the distribution of ACE news releases and other materials

Write press releases to increase visibility of ACE

Distribute to press contact list and ACE members

### Newsletter

Establish publication schedule and theme for the quarterly ACE newsletter

Develop and update advertising rate sheet for potential advertiser in the ACE newsletter

Identify content for newsletters

Write and/or solicit articles and items for newsletter from members and other cooperative organization  
Identify related photos and graphics  
Work with newsletter designer as needed  
Distribute newsletter  
Post newsletter on ACE website

### Website

Oversee all aspects of the ACE website content  
Update ACE website regularly  
Improve and expand website format and content to more clearly communicate to the diverse generations of cooperative employees, developers and educators  
Survey cooperative organizations annually for relevant contributions to the resources section of the website  
Develop ways to use website to improve administrative efficiency of organization  
Work with Webmaster and graphic designer as necessary  
Provide assistance to members needing help using the ACE site or accessing materials  
Locate and work with content providers on ACE-initiated items as needed  
Develop new services and employ new technologies to meet ACE's goals and member needs.  
Solicit website sponsorships

## **III. Institute**

Responsible for all aspects of the ACE Institute

### Institute Hotel

Handle all arrangements with hotel regarding Institute, including but not limited to meeting rooms, meeting rooms set up, food and beverage ordering and guarantees, master account, speaker accommodations  
Monitor room block  
Fulfill deposit and other deadlines included in hotel contract  
Hold pre-conference meeting with hotel staff

### Institute Program Development

Identify and contact persons to serve on institute program planning Committee

Arrange and facilitate program planning committee conference calls to discuss program topics, speakers, themes

Maintain communications with program planning committee as needed

Contact speakers

Identify local host committee

Work with host committee to identify and schedule cooperative study tours and arrange transportation for tours

### Institute Promotion

Develop institute promotional materials, including registration materials, newsletter articles, press releases, and other information as needed including information about the ACE Awards and ACE auction

Work with ACE graphic designer where needed

Work with webmaster to keep website up to date with Institute related information

### Audio Visual

Establish audio visual needs of speakers

Contract for audio visual services, including contracting for Simultaneous interpretation

### Registration

Monitor registration numbers

Develop registration confirmation letter for mailing or email

Develop all Institute registration materials including final agenda, speaker biographies, program evaluation form, other materials

Coordinate registration desk at Institute

### Onsite meeting coordination

Enlist assistance from ACE Board, local host committee and ACE staff or members for registration desk, auction, photography and other functions as needed

Point person on all contingencies arising at the Institute

### Awards

Arrange for contribution and delivery of awards  
Coordinating activities of awards committee  
Prepare Awards Banquet Program and update past award winners list  
Identify awards presenters  
Prepare introductory remarks for awards presenters

### Post Institute Follow up

Prepare thank you letters to all speakers, program planning, local hosts, and cooperative study tour locations and sponsors  
Write press releases for ACE Awards and individual recipients, ACE board and officer results, and other releases as needed  
Review and process Institute financial obligations  
Secure and post all Institute presentations and PowerPoint on ACE website

### Future Meeting Locations

Identify potential properties for future ACE meetings as requested by ACE Board  
Handle hotel negotiations

### Sponsorship

Solicit Institute sponsorships  
Develop and implement sponsor recognition plan

### Participation

Identify cooperative leaders, emerging leaders and students whose attendance at the Institute would enhance their professional development or whose participation would benefit other institute attendees  
Assist in logistic and financial planning to assure participation

## **IV. Organizational administration:**

### Board of Directors

Provide leadership to ACE and its Board of Directors  
Develop and implement programs and activities that advance ACE strategic planning objectives

Implement policy directives of the board of directors  
Prepare board agenda and materials in conjunction with president  
Staff board committees  
Correspond with board between meetings  
Participate in quarterly ACE Board meetings  
Other duties as assigned by ACE Board of Directors

#### Grants and sponsorships

Research and write grant applications for support of ACE Programs  
Prepare evaluations of grants  
Maintain relationships with Foundation supporters  
Develop and maintain relations with sponsors

#### Collaboration and Partnerships

Develop and maintain relationships with cooperatives, membership organizations, cooperative development centers, government organizations and universities in the US, Canada and the Caribbean  
Develop partnership opportunities with cooperative and development organizations to enhance ACE and cooperative education  
Represent ACE's interests and relationship with state, provincial, national, and international cooperative development/education organizations

#### Budget, finance, legal compliance

Oversee all aspects of ACE administration to ensure fiscal stability, and legal compliance, including bookkeeping, invoicing, and accounting  
Prepare annual budget  
Ensure timely tax return and corporate filings to retain ACE's tax-exempt status  
Work with accountant on annual audit  
Supervise annual election and membership meeting process;  
Assure compliance with ACE bylaws, articles of incorporation, state and federal laws  
Consult with ACE outside counsel as needed

### **Required qualifications**

ACE is looking for an organization that can provide a designated administrator for ACE and provide services to support tasks outlined above or subcontract and manage contracts to provide these services:

Qualifications administrator:

Individual already identified as a cooperative education leader

Well-connected and involved with key clientele

Experience working with multicultural organization or groups

Innovative and dynamic

Able to communicate ACE identity

Grant writing experience

Able to outsource as needed and manage contractors

Able to work with board and others on program planning and other projects

High degree of personal organization.

Thorough knowledge of cooperative principles and structures.

Familiarity with the ACE membership and their needs and interests, as well as with other cooperative support organizations

Familiarity with information sources on cooperatives, education, research and other issues important to the membership

Computer literacy and familiarity with web-based delivery of services. Basic office and online

Meeting planning experience

Experience writing and managing budgets.

Required Qualification of Organization

Stable organization with commitment to cooperative education

Depth beyond designated administrator

Access to resources such as: IT, web, meeting coordination writing and editing, graphic design, data base management, accounting, clerical and administration

**Proposal details**

Proposals must be submitted electronically to Leslie Mead ( [HYPERLINK "mailto:Leslie.mead@verizon.net" Leslie.mead@verizon.net](mailto:Leslie.mead@verizon.net)), executive administrator of ACE, by June 30, 2008. All proposals should include:

1. An outline of how your organization will use internal and external resources to perform the work outlined above.
2. Complete list of qualifications of organization and staff to be involved in ACE administration.

**Proposal consideration and project timeline**

The contract will be awarded by August 1, subject to the quality of proposals received and a successful contract negotiation with the ACE board.