

The Associated Church Press  
**Request for Proposals**  
Proposal Deadline: Monday, July 15, 2024  
Executive Director Services

The Associated Church Press (hereafter ACP) seeks proposals from qualified individuals and firms for the provision of executive director services to our professional organization. We are seeking to establish a contract on an annual basis, to begin no later than September 1, 2024.

**Timeline**

RFP open for submission: June 15, 2024

Proposal submission deadline July 15, 2024

Search committee review and interviews: August 7, 2024

Board consideration, approval, and new contract August 21, 2024

New executive director or administrative firm announced August 28, 2024

**Primary contact:** Cynthia Martens, [cmartens@sojo.net](mailto:cmartens@sojo.net)

The ACP board will examine submitted proposals and will award a contract to the individual or firm whose proposal is determined to be most closely aligned to ACP's needs considering the factors set forth in this RFP. The initial contract resulting from the RFP will be effective after approval by the ACP board, with annual renewal contingent upon contractual requirements being satisfied based on an end-of-year review by ACP officers. ACP will determine when it will be appropriate to issue a new RFP for management services or to renew for a successive contract.

**Background Information**

The ACP is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation. The ACP traces its origin to a Saint Louis, Mo., meeting in 1916, making it the oldest interdenominational religious press association in North America. Editors covering the quadrennial meeting of the Federal Council of Churches (now the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA) decided that they should meet on a continuing basis. The ACP's current membership is broadly ecumenical, including publications and individuals affiliated with Adventists, Anabaptists, Catholics, Historically Black denominations, Mainline and Pietist Protestants, and faith-based groups without a particular affiliation.

As written in its bylaws, the purpose of the ACP is to promote acquaintance and fellowship among members in the United States and Canada, to foster collaboration among staff of its member publications and its individual members, and to stimulate higher standards of religious communication to enable its members to serve and challenge the Christian community to live out

its faith and to strive for peace, justice, and the common good in contemporary society. Our web address is [www.theacp.org/](http://www.theacp.org/).

### **Scope of Contracted Work**

In recent years, the independent contractor providing executive director services has fulfilled their duties without exceeding the equivalent of a half-time position on average (20 hours per week over 50 weeks). There was a heavier workload in the week immediately preceding and the week of the convention, as well as around the time of membership renewals and the awards contest, balanced by a lighter workload at other times.

The provider of executive director services will manage the day-to-day business affairs of ACP and implement work on behalf of the Association consistent with the policies and procedures of ACP. The ACP office address will be that of the contracted individual or firm providing executive director services.

### **Administrative and financial tasks**

- Maintaining and updating the membership database, integrated with other ACP business.
- Handling in-house all bookkeeping, correspondence, record keeping, labels, registration, and lists, and mailings up to 300 pieces. For larger amounts, a mailing house may be used.
- Filing all documents required by the Internal Revenue Service, and maintaining ACP's filing as a nonprofit corporation with the Illinois Secretary of State, in collaboration with the designated ACP member in Illinois serving in the capacity of ACP's registered agent, complying with Illinois filing and reporting requirements.
- Receiving, depositing, and recording payments to ACP, and together with the treasurer ensuring the ACP is compliant with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for financial management. The provider of executive director services and the ACP treasurer will work together to maintain bank accounts and all financial records.
- Monitoring the operations of ACP within the budgetary requirements set by the ACP board for all expenses and income.

### **Annual program work and specific services**

- Manage all aspects of **membership renewal** yearly, including contacting current members through timely mailings and digital and phone follow-ups; identifying and inviting past members to consider returning; and collecting, processing, and recording membership dues; as well as identifying and engaging potential new members, with the assistance of board members and member volunteers.

- Coordinating the stages of the **awards contest**, which involves several hundred applicants in several dozen categories, including recruiting 50 judges with assistance from board and member volunteers, and managing the software used for judging, as well as helping the board to determine year-to-year whether it is the best software option.
- Meeting deadlines throughout the year for **annual convention**, including securing venue, setting up hotel room block and serving as a liaison with the hotel, and choosing and confirming keynote speakers, panelists, and workshop presenters, to the extent that this is not completed by board and member volunteers.
- Preparing a budget and keeping the planners apprised of how the plans fit with the budget, and ensuring all deposits are made, e.g. for catering.
- Soliciting meeting and event sponsors, identified with assistance from board and member volunteers, and ensuring that sponsor benefits are received.
- Promoting the convention in all appropriate channels, including social media and ACP newsletters.
- Providing on-site staff support at the event, arriving at the venue at least 24 hours before the start of the event (which in recent years has been held in the spring).

### **Communications and publishing**

- Prepare and coordinate the circulation of various communications, including newsletters, social media, and the ACP website for disseminating news about ACP activities and members.
- Handling physical mail and email addressed to the ACP, as well as any requests for information about the ACP's programs, membership, events, etc., replying as appropriate within 24–48 hours and keeping the president and board members informed as needed.
- Promoting the convention in all appropriate channels, including social media and ACP newsletters.
- Collaborating with board members and others to offer additional benefits to our members to the extent possible, for example offering webinars or coordinating guest presenters to do so.

### **Summary of Association status and concerns**

The ACP is financially solvent with a small reserve of cash. We set the following goals for 2024:

1. Build relationships with existing members
2. Invigorate member engagement
3. Establish consistent fundraising and member acquisition strategies
4. Raise the public profile of the Associated Church Press
5. Provide high-level board interaction

### **Compensation and related terms of contract**

The range for the management fee will be \$40,000–\$44,000 (paid quarterly: at the end of March, the end of June, the end of September, and the end of December). The board reviews finances each year with the goal of adding COLA increases each year. The provider of executive director services will be an independent contractor, and will not be an employee, nor will anyone employed by a firm providing services. The provider is responsible for all equipment and facilities needed to perform the services outlined in this contract. Invoices for services such as auditing, legal, and mailing house services shall be paid directly by ACP to the vendor. A firm providing services will retain the right to determine which of its personnel shall be assigned to a particular ACP project and to reassign such personnel during the term of a contract.

### **Response Format and Proposal Instructions**

Responses must include the following information that will serve as the basis for rating qualifications of the individual or firm in this RFP.

1. Provide an executive summary of your approach—condense and highlight your approach to the contents of the proposal.
2. Provide evidence of the individual or firm’s ability to provide executive director services, including background and experience with other organizations, including their approximate budget levels. Please highlight any background in publishing, especially faith-based publishing, and connection to the ACP or a similar organization such as Anabaptist Communicators, the Canadian Christian Communicators Association, the Catholic Media Association (formerly Catholic Press Association), Evangelical Press Association, Religion Communicators Council, or Religion News Association.
3. Individuals and firms must list at least three (3) references for similar work completed in the association management market that includes the following information: company name, address and phone number; contact name, title and email; website address (if applicable). ACP may contact the individuals listed.
4. Fee Structure: Detail the fees associated with providing the detailed scope of work and any additional costs that may be associated with fulfilling this scope of work.
5. Individuals/firms may also provide any additional information that may be relevant to the proposal and the evaluation of the individual/firm’s experience.

### **Submission and General Instructions**

Individuals and firms responding to this announcement shall submit their proposal by email to Cynthia Martens, [cmartens@sojo.net](mailto:cmartens@sojo.net) by July 15, 2024. Late proposals will not be accepted.

All proposals should be submitted as a PDF. Submitted proposals should not exceed ten (10) printed pages in their entirety, inclusive of appendices and other reference material, but not including individual resumes.

Additional information, other than the 10-page submission and resumes, will not be reviewed. Font size for basic narrative descriptions must be no smaller than 12-point Times New Roman. The subject line should read: ACP proposal for executive director services.

### **Nondiscrimination**

The individual or firm contracted with the ACP will adopt and disseminate a policy that the vendor, in employment, recruitment, selection, compensation, benefits, promotion, demotion, layoff, termination, and all other terms and conditions of employment will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, sex or gender identity, sexuality, national origin, ethnic identity, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital status, economic status, or any other legally protected basis.

The ACP values diversity as central to our work and seeks leadership who will uphold these values in our work together. We encourage proposals by individuals and firms from a wide range of backgrounds, including contractors who are women, LGBTQIA+, Black, Indigenous, and people of color, and people with disabilities.