



EMMANUEL COLLEGE

**Brand Enhancement Initiative:  
Phases 1 and 2: Market Research and Brand Strategy**

**Request for Proposal | December 2014**

## **Goal of the Brand Enhancement Initiative**

Advance Emmanuel College's vision and strategic goals by broadening positive awareness of the value of an Emmanuel education, and by making the College stand out as a clear-cut choice in the minds of its most important audiences, leading to enhanced performance in enrollment, retention, fundraising, faculty and staff recruitment, and other vital metrics.

### **Phase 1 | Market Research**

#### **Objective**

Conduct qualitative and quantitative research to understand current perceptions of Emmanuel College among key external audiences—as well as marketplace opportunities that the College could seize through new or revamped programs. Analyze findings and identify relevant, actionable conclusions to inform the development of a successful brand strategy in Phase 2.

#### **Activities**

- Conduct two days of on-site familiarization interviews with key internal stakeholders.
- Review all current and recent marketing communications to understand existing messaging, as well as the College's mission, history, culture and programs.
- Perform a thorough review of all relevant existing research, including but not limited to past branding exercises, data collected during recent website redesign, enrollment data and findings provided by Maguire Associates, a 2012 alumni survey, and an alumni study conducted by Simpson Scarborough.
- Examine this information in order to (a) identify areas where additional knowledge is needed or would be valuable and (b) inform the development of questionnaires for further qualitative and quantitative research.
- Conduct three online surveys, including one faculty survey; collect and analyze responses.
- Conduct interviews, in person or by phone, with approximately 40 individuals (10 prospective students, 10 prospective parents, 10 current Graduate and Continuing Studies students, and 10 alumni). Client to provide the names of interviewees and their contact information.
- Conduct 3-5 focus groups.
- Review the websites and any other publicly available marketing communications of Emmanuel's current competitor institutions. Understand these schools' current market positions and Emmanuel's relative strengths and vulnerabilities within this current set.

- Assess current College programs, both at the undergraduate level and the Graduate and Continuing Studies level, and the degree to which they are distinctive in the current educational marketplace.
- Present research findings and recommendations.

### **Deliverable**

- Research Findings: A report of salient findings emerging from all research activities, supported by data. Conclusions will provide the foundation for the development of the College’s brand strategy in Phase 2 and inform institutional decisions about programs to launch, strengthen or discontinue.

### **Timeframe**

*Work to begin February 1. Please provide a milestones calendar and an estimate of the number of weeks this phase will require.*

## **Phase 2 | Brand Strategy**

### **Objective**

Develop, test and build internal consensus for an enhanced, research-based brand strategy for Emmanuel College in order to:

- position Emmanuel for measurable gains in awareness, reputation, enrollment, and philanthropic support;
- help all who represent the College to speak with one voice and to “evangelize” the brand more effectively;
- pave the way for the possible assessment and adjustment of Emmanuel College’s visual identity, as well as targeted and effective marketing solutions in all media in Phase 3; and
- ensure less iteration, faster approvals, and shorter production times for creative campaigns.

### **Activities**

- Based on research conducted in Phase 1, develop Hypothetical Emmanuel College Brand Positioning Platform.
- Test messages with internal and external stakeholders in order to validate and/or strengthen key components of the platform.
- Present and build consensus for the platform.

## **Deliverable**

- Hypothetical Emmanuel College Brand Positioning Platform: A presentation/document suggesting the key components of the Emmanuel College “Master Brand,” as well as “Sub-Brands” for (1) Undergraduate Enrollment, (2) Graduate and Continuing Studies Enrollment, and (3) The Emmanuel Fund. For the Master Brand and each of the three Sub-Brands, the document defines:
  - > target audiences (To whom, exactly, are we speaking? What benefits do they seek? What is most important to them?);
  - > an aspirational competitor set (if appropriate)
  - > differentiation strategy (How should Emmanuel position itself in order to set itself apart from its competitors in a meaningful and enduring way?)
  - > the “big idea” (What is the single creative theme/concept that will act as a “wedge” in the marketplace and seize the attention, imagination, and mindshare of target audiences?).
  - > the elevator pitch (How do we convey Emmanuel’s value proposition crisply and succinctly?);
  - > a set of engaging and memorable messages (Exactly what do we say to the target audience to make them care?);
  - > an editorial style and tone (What is the voice with which we express these messages? Include sample text of strong, descriptive language that resonates powerfully with target audiences.);

## **Timeframe**

*Please provide a milestones calendar and an estimate of the number of weeks this phase will require.*

## **Phase 3 | Brand Expression** *(for reference – pricing not to be included in proposal)*

- Enhance as appropriate Emmanuel College’s visual identity for the Master Brand and for each of the three Sub-Brands.
- Develop creative concepts for admissions communications in various media (both for undergraduate enrollment and for Graduate and Continuing Studies enrollment) and the Emmanuel Fund.
- Work closely with relevant Emmanuel staff to enhance tactical, multi-channel communications plans for admissions (undergraduate and GCS) and the Emmanuel Fund.

*Precise scope and timeframe of this phase TBD.*

## **Critical Success Factors**

Members of the selected agency must demonstrate:

- Outstanding expertise and experience in marketing and advertising.
- Experience in successfully advancing the reputations and strategic marketing goals of similar institutions.
- Deep familiarity with trends in the education marketplace.
- Understanding of the mission and goals of Catholic higher education and Emmanuel College specifically.
- Responsiveness to the feedback of internal stakeholders, as well as skill in building consensus.

## **Responding to this Proposal**

We request that proposals be submitted to Emmanuel College the week of January 19, 2015. Please provide separate estimates for Phases 1 and 2.

Please also include:

- Bios of the team members who would be assigned to this project and their roles and responsibilities.
- Names of any sub-consulting firms you would utilize for this project and names/bios of their team members.

A PDF will suffice but if, in addition, you would like to submit printed copies, please send five (5) to:

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## **Questions?**

Contact Sam O'Neill at [oneills@emmanuel.edu](mailto:oneills@emmanuel.edu); 617-735-9989.