



PA WILDS CENTER
FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP



The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship Social Media Marketing Specialist

Request for Proposals

Summary

Do you have what it takes to help tell the story of the Pennsylvania Wilds?

The PA Wilds Center is looking to contract with a highly motivated, creative individual or firm with experience in social media marketing and digital communications to help promote the unique assets and experiences of the Pennsylvania Wilds. Applicants must have a core understanding of and passion for the Pennsylvania Wilds lifestyle and region, and a drive to connect in a meaningful way with current and future PA Wilds fans and customers.

Do you live for the Pennsylvania Wilds lifestyle? Do you love getting out to explore, take photos, craft captions and share on social media? We want to talk to you!

Contract Amount: \$6,000 - 6 Month Contract, with opportunity for renewal. The contract does not include additional funds for travel except where indicated for training. Applicants must outline number of hours per week they would dedicate to this contract, if awarded, based on available funds.

Timeline:

February 6, 2019: RFP issued.

February 21, 2019 (COB): Proposals due.

February 25 - March 8, 2019 or earlier: Interviews.

By March 11 or earlier: Contract Awarded.

March 18: Contract Begins.

March - April 2019: Contractor onboarding sessions (in-person and virtual).

March 18, 2019 – September 18, 2019: 6 Month Contract Period

September 2019: Review of work.

Management: The Social Media Marketing Specialist will work with the PA Wilds Center Outreach Coordinator and Communications Director.

To Apply: Send your proposal to Kristin Lewis, Communications Director, kewis@pawildscenter.org by February 21, 2019 at 5:00 PM EST. Files over 5MB should be sent using a Dropbox or similar file share method.

Project Scope

The selected contractor will help energize the PA Wilds consumer-facing social media profiles, help develop our social media strategy, be responsible for social media posting, and communicate with our online fan community.

- Serve as the primary voice for the PA Wilds consumer brand on Facebook and Instagram
- Cultivate travel influencer activity and partnerships, community sharing; utilize hashtag strategies and re-sharing opportunities; communicate with fans for re-sharing permissions and other promotion
- Manage and schedule compelling social media posts on a regular basis



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- Help us develop and refine our overall social media strategy
- Develop systems and policies to help streamline these communications
- Create original, compelling social media copy to drive fan engagement and calls to action. Utilize PA Wilds existing content for posts; Contractor may also post original content / photos.
- Document strategy, systems and policies as part of our Communications Plan, in partnership with Outreach Coordinator and Communications Director

Project goals

The Social Media Marketing Specialist will help the PA Wilds Center achieve several goals important to its broader mission:

- Increase PA Wilds brand awareness; Help establish the voice of the PA Wilds on social platforms
- Tell the story of the region in a way that inspires travel and cultivates regional pride;
- Promote content from pawilds.com on social media;
- Engage followers, connect with influencers, relevant brands and stakeholders from around the region, develop online community, and build brand awareness;
- Increase raw number of followers and encourage firsthand experience contributions (WildSPEAK – our content contributor network);
- Develop protocol / system for long-term posting strategy (will become part of Communications Plan);
- Help establish meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics to track success
- Audit social media channels for opportunities to consolidate and/or braid messaging across platforms;
- Determine if there are other channels that should be utilized by the PA Wilds Center for maximum engagement;
- Understand key audiences and how to best communicate information to them.

Existing Challenges

- Limited personnel (currently have one part-time contractor assisting with social media for Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania - WCO);
- Strategy for finding, collecting and disseminating partner information on social channels;
- Strategy for streamlining multiple brands, channels, and audiences;
- Streamlining communications across platforms;
- Braiding content in a way that is easily interpreted / understood by core audiences.

Core Social Media Accounts:

- **Facebook:**
[Facebook.com/thePaWilds](https://www.facebook.com/thePaWilds)
- **Instagram:**
[instagram.com/thepawilds](https://www.instagram.com/thepawilds)

Inactive Social Media Accounts:

- **Twitter:**
<https://twitter.com/ThePAWilds>
- **Pinterest:**
www.pinterest.com/thepawilds/

Other:

- **YouTube:**
[youtube.com/user/thepawilds](https://www.youtube.com/user/thepawilds)

Contractor Requirements

- Individuals must be a resident of the Pennsylvania Wilds region, which includes the following counties: Cameron, Clarion, Clinton, Lycoming, Tioga, Potter, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Warren, Elk, Clearfield and northern Centre. Businesses must be located, headquartered or have a satellite office in the Pennsylvania



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Wilds region, which includes the following counties: Cameron, Clarion, Clinton, Lycoming, Tioga, Potter, Forest, Jefferson, McKean, Warren, Elk, Clearfield and northern Centre

- Individuals: Associate's degree or higher in communications, marketing, or related field;
- Background and demonstrated experience in social media marketing;
- Understanding of rural region, challenges and entrepreneurial spirit;
- Attend an in-person training workshop (lunch will be provided & mileage will be reimbursed);
- Hit follower metrics (to be established in final contract) and work toward goals established in this RFP;
- Participate in additional training opportunities as presented by the PA Wilds Center.

Technical Requirements

Contractor will be required to have:

- a smart phone
- a laptop with basic office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- internet
- office space (does not need to be public)
- access to and working knowledge of Google Drive and Gmail
- a dependable vehicle

Additional Benefits

Contractor will also receive:

- (1) Complimentary ticket to the Annual PA Wilds Dinner (November 7, 2019)
- Membership in the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania
- Opportunity to participate in special "Friends & Family" discount events at the PA Wilds Conservation Shop

Include the following in your proposal response:

- Cover letter summarizing your / your organization's qualifications for this contract
- Outline number of hours per week to be dedicated to this contract, if awarded, based on available funds.
- Resume, if applying as an individual
- General description of your operation, if applying as an organization (include total number of staff, if applicable, and identify who will be assigned as lead for fulfilling contract if it will not be you individually)
- Please provide 2-3 sample social media posts for PA Wilds Facebook and/or PA Wilds Instagram;
- Please describe the experience you have with social media, outreach strategies and/or content development for organizations and/or businesses in the past. Please provide examples and links to any social media handles, websites, blogs, articles, etc. you would like to showcase as examples

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR CONTRACT

About Our Organization

The PA Wilds Center for Entrepreneurship, Inc. (PA Wilds Center) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to integrate conservation and economic development in a way that strengthens and inspires communities in the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Many local partners are involved in the effort to grow the region's nature and heritage tourism industry. The PA Wilds Center is the coordinating entity among these partners. The PA Wilds Center's work is sustained through program fees, philanthropic giving, government grants, and entrepreneurial activities related to the Pennsylvania Wilds brand.

Promoting locally-made handcrafted products and tying them to the regional tourism brand and visitor experience has been a key focus of the Wilds work for 10 years. More than 200 Juried Artisans participate in The Wilds Cooperative program currently, working across a variety of mediums, from wood to pottery to photography to fibers to painting to metals to culinary arts. Their unique products allow visitors to "take home a piece of the Pennsylvania Wilds."

Learn more about the PA Wilds Center here: www.pawildscenter.org.

Learn more about The Wilds Cooperative of PA here: www.wildcsopa.org.

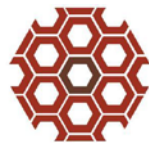
Learn more about the PA Wilds as a region here: www.pawilds.com.

About Our Work

PA Wilds Center looks to expand our entrepreneurial ecosystem tied to the region's growing destination and lifestyle brand. This ecosystem includes a trademarked brand (the PA Wilds logo); a regional products value chain (called The Wilds Cooperative of PA, currently 300 businesses strong); an online store (ShopthePAwilds.org) and physical brick-and-mortar locations (PA Wilds Conservation Shops) that sell products and services from this rural products value chain; regional marketing (pawilds.com and related ad campaigns); and business development tools and mentoring for businesses in our value chain.

Where chains and big boxes can vacuum money out of tiny rural communities, our regional entrepreneurial ecosystem is being designed to do the opposite -- to systematically re-invest in, and build supports around, those toughest businesses to grow on the rural landscape -- small businesses -- helping entrepreneurs brand their products and get them to market, build skills, grow revenues, create jobs and inspire local pride. An economic force in its own right, this ecosystem is also designed to enhance community character and build the amenities that will make the region's communities -- and existing major employers there -- more competitive.

Building awareness about the region's assets is vital to attracting visitors and encouraging regional travel, which in turn stimulates local economies with the infusion of outside dollars. This supports small businesses across the region, including those participating in the Center's rural value chain.



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The PA Wilds Geography: The Pennsylvania Wilds, one of the state’s 11 official Tourism Regions and 8 Conservation Landscapes, is a large rural area that covers about a quarter of the Commonwealth and is home to about 4 percent of the state’s population. The 12.5-county landscape is known for its two million acres of public land -- more than Yellowstone National Park. It also boasts two National Wild & Scenic Rivers, the largest wild elk herd in the Northeast and some of the darkest skies in the country. It has a rich oil and lumber heritage. Stakeholders have identified 14 headliner experiences throughout the region, broken down into 8 Journeys and 6 Landscapes, to help pique traveler interests and encourage travel to each portion of the region.

The Wilds Cooperative of PA: A value chain network of nearly 300 businesses, the WCO is the PA Wilds Center’s main business development program. It focuses on growing the kinds of unique businesses that are central to place-based tourism development (artisans, craft micro-producers, B&Bs, unique restaurants and retailers, etc). This is a juried program (for producers) that helps tie these rural businesses to the landscapes they serve. A key portion of this membership program that will be important to this contractor’s knowledge base will be our Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) stakeholder group – which includes 7 visitors’ bureaus from around the region. The Center’s goal is to leverage some of the regional promotion tools already being developed by these organizations and ultimately drive traffic to them for more detailed planning.

PA Wilds Conservation Shop: An omnichannel commerce platform (online and brick-and-mortar) where we sell products from our value chain. The buying practices for the PA Wilds Conservation Shop maintain that a minimum of 90% of the inventory for the commerce platform is purchased from local businesses and micro producers in The Wilds Cooperative and PA Wilds Licensing programs. See some of the products at www.shopthepawilds.com.

Lifestyle Marketing: Sustained lifestyle marketing for the region is accomplished through media content platforms and marketing campaigns to promote visitation to the region and the purchase of local products and services (the sale of which supports the Center’s mission and is reinvested into lifestyle marketing). One component of this marketing effort is the PA Wilds Are Calling blog (www.pawilds.com/blog) which features a variety of content stories from Center staff, contractors, and volunteer contributors. Ongoing contributors to the blog become “WildSPEAK” members of the WCO. WildSPEAK is our Civilian Storyteller Corps, and members contribute their **Stories of Personal Experience And Knowledge**. Details about WildSPEAK can be found at www.pawilds.com/wildspeak.

Online Platforms & Social Media Ecosystem

- www.pawilds.com - the longest standing website related to the Pennsylvania Wilds movement, is geared toward travelers. This will be the main source of content promoted by the contracted Social Media Marketing Specialist. Overhauled in 2017, the site helps visitors navigate the region through 14 identified headliner experiences, outlined through six “Landscapes” and eight “Journeys.” Understanding that visitors do not travel based on county boundaries, the new website calls out popular destination sub-regions and travel routes. Each of the Landscape and Journey web pages populate with information about the related natural asset, provide a selection of things to do in the area, and also list members of the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania with public establishments, ultimately linking potential PA Wilds visitors and buyers to members with brick-and-mortar establishments. In addition, PaWilds.com is being developed as a publishing platform, travel inspiration guide, information resource, and online shop. The PA Wilds Conservation Shop is also tied to this online platform at <https://pawilds.shop/>.



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- www.pawildscenter.org - the PA Wilds Center's organizational website, where one can learn more about the history of the Pennsylvania Wilds region and movement as well as the PA Wilds Center's mission, programs and services. This site was launched after the founding of the PA Wilds Center in 2014.
- www.widscopa.org - houses all things related to the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania. WCO members apply to become a member on this site, which also houses members' profiles, the member directory, and other general information about how to be promoted as part of the Pennsylvania Wilds experience. This site also includes a professional forum where WCO members can announce events and other opportunities for creative entrepreneurs. This site was launched in 2017 following the 2016 rebranding of the PA Wilds Artisan Trail to the Wilds Cooperative of Pennsylvania.

Contractors will have access to additional resources, including:

- [PA Wilds Center 2016-2017 Annual Report](#)
- [PA Wilds 2018-2021 Strategic Plan](#)
- [Value Chain information](#)