

**Request for Proposals for a  
Virtual Event/Conference Planner to  
lead CPA's 31st annual  
"Leading the Challenge" Virtual  
Prevention Conference, in June 2021.**



**OVERVIEW**

This request for proposal (RFP) is issued by the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance (hereinafter "CPA"). The purpose of this RFP is to establish a contract with a qualified virtual event/conference planner beginning approximately December 14, 2020, to execute a successful conference held **virtually** the week of June 14, 2021. A successful candidate (or organization) will be detail oriented, organized, maintain and develop relationships, and be motivated to execute a successful conference. Part of the preparation includes attending or calling into conference planning meetings bi-monthly, engagement with speakers/presenters, technological expertise, and successful implementation. This also includes attending the full virtual conference.

**EVENT DESCRIPTION**

Each June, CPA hosts a conference in State College, PA, to provide drug and alcohol prevention professionals the opportunity to network, engage in skill-building workshops, and attend informative lecture sessions on topics relevant to the prevention of substance abuse and risk-related behaviors. Sessions are organized around themes such as advocacy, evidence-based programs, technology, research, risky behaviors, and current trends. Everyone from new prevention professionals to seasoned veterans find this event valuable and worthwhile. In June 2020, approximately 405 individuals attended our virtual conference. For more detail about this event or to view the past conference brochure, please go to the website of the [Commonwealth Prevention Alliance](https://www.commonwealthpa.org/).

**PROJECTED DATES:** Week of June 14, 2021

**RESPONSIBLE FOR:** The coordination of the CPA annual conference, ensuring logistics and requirements are managed effectively. Completing a wide range of activities and tasks requiring clear communication, excellent organizational skills, and attention to detail.

**SALARY:** Flat Fee

**TIME FRAME:** December 14, 2020 to July 31, 2021

**PURPOSE:** To deliver a high quality, exciting and innovative conference, working with the CPA executive director, CPA conference committee, and other designated points of contact. The role will execute a successful virtual conference format, agenda, speakers, and other possible events.

**REPORTS TO:** CPA executive director and actively supports CPA conference committee and board of directors.

## **CPA ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION**

CPA is a nonprofit organization established in 1976 by a small group of dedicated and progressive thinking prevention specialists. The goal of this group was to improve the quality of substance abuse prevention programming and the level of professionalism, in the field, throughout the Commonwealth. CPA continues to serve as a strong advocate on behalf of prevention and is dedicated to validating the important role and impact as well as the sustainability of substance abuse prevention. Additionally, since 1991, CPA has been providing a state of the art, dynamic, and comprehensive annual conference which brings together prevention practitioners and other vested stakeholders in the field to lead the challenge in saving lives and building strong, healthy communities. Due to the incredible accomplishments of this all volunteer board, CPA has experienced tremendous growth in its membership and attendance at its annual conference. Also, in January 2019, CPA announced the hiring of an Executive Director who is responsible for overseeing the administration, programs, and strategic plan of CPA.

CPA has made great strides in advancing the field of prevention. Noteworthy endeavors include testifying before congress regarding the need to reduce the use of tobacco products; developing prevention specialist certification in partnership with the Pennsylvania Certification Board and Pennsylvania Prevention Directors Association; representing the grass-roots prevention provider on multiple Department of Drug and Alcohol Program workgroups, such as the prevention workgroup and grant advisory boards. CPA continues to work closely with the Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs on the development of the new prevention needs assessment and planning process. These partnerships allow local prevention voices to be heard and understood at the state level.

## **CONFERENCE COORDINATOR SCOPE OF WORK**

To realize the above, we seek an innovative virtual conference planner to fully understand the [mission, goals, and commitment of CPA \(www.commonwealthpreventionalliance.org\)](http://www.commonwealthpreventionalliance.org) and to provide the following project deliverables. The virtual conference planner will NOT be working on this event alone. The CPA conference committee, CPA board of directors, and CPA executive director will be involved in all project deliverables listed below.

## **CPA CONFERENCE COMMITTEE**

The conference committee consists of CPA Board of Directors, CPA members, CPA Executive Director, State partners, and others. This committee has a chairperson who plans the agenda, facilitates meetings, and solicits input and guidance from committee members, including the conference coordinator. Conference Goals include:

1. Attendance of 400+ people.
2. Generate conference revenue via sponsorships and vendor participation.
3. Provide the field with dynamic speakers and workshops to assist their prevention efforts to improve to public health, in their communities.
4. Expected time for opening conference registration, March 15, 2021.

## **PROJECT DELIVERABLES**

### General Management

- Maintain open communication and report to CPA executive director and conference committee chair.
- Follow the timeline and work plan for the conference.
- Maintain effective and regular communication with the conference committee, providing updates on progress, issues, resources and budget matters.
- Attend and participate in two monthly conference committee meetings (approximately 2 hours/month).

### Event Marketing

- Assist with conference webpage development.

### Meeting Participation

- Participate (via ZOOM) in bi-monthly meeting facilitated by conference committee chair or CPA executive director.
- As conference approaches, additional meetings will occur sometimes with full committee or with executive director and/or conference committee chair.

### Speaker Engagement

- Work with CPA directors and conference committee to develop a variety of potential workshop presenters and speakers.
- Effectively communicate with conference speakers to assist and plan their video presentation and ensure completion of pre-recorded video sessions.

### Conference Technology

- Utilize a platform to record and store speaker sessions, which will be pre-recorded and then played during scheduled conference time.
- Facilitate a brief speaker training to help guide them through the process of pre-recording their session.
- Have vast knowledge of online virtual platforms.
- Develop online tools (conference hub on our website) for conference attendees.
- Have an understanding and ability to use Word Press.

### Week of Event

- Virtually attend during the week of the conference to assist with conference sessions.

### Post Conference

- Participate with CPA conference committee on two virtual meetings to debrief on conference outcome.

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS**

This RFP represents the opportunity to be involved in the 2021 CPA Conference. The contract is not full-time; however, it will last from December 14, 2020 to July 31, 2021. The CPA executive committee will negotiate a contractual agreement with the preferred applicant. By responding to the RFP, the applicant understands they are fully responsible for meeting the requirements of the RFP and will

ask and execute the necessary tasks to make sure the conference is successfully completed. The CPA board of directors reserves the right to accept or reject, in whole or in part, any and all submissions/responses to this RFP. Note that the information in this RFP represents the vision of the CPA Board of Directors currently and is subject to change as the project moves forward.

Questions: Participants may ask questions about the RFP by sending them via email to: [jeff.hanley@commonwealthpreventionalliance.org](mailto:jeff.hanley@commonwealthpreventionalliance.org).

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTION**

*All applicants **must** submit the following information:*

1. Organization/individual name and number of staff assigned to this event.
2. Organization address and contact information. Please include principal (staff member assigned to this event) name and contact information.
3. Very brief description of work history in planning of virtual events/conferences (can include samples of relevant work). Experience in planning virtual events is required of this application.
4. Share experience with online platforms (ZOOM, YouTube, etc.), your plan to communicate with conference speakers, and how you would market this event on our website.
5. Description of conference planning services offered; demonstrate you have the workload capacity to make this job happen.
6. A description of how you would contribute to CPA's development of a diverse and inclusive lineup of speakers and topics.
7. Please include an event budget which includes all anticipated costs and fees associated with planning and executing an event like the CPA Conference, including the deliverables stated above.
8. Please include a preliminary conference production timeline with project deliverables relevant to an event like the CPA Conference.
9. Two (2) event references for similar type events that applicant has coordinated.
10. If coordinating other Pennsylvania events, please address any conflict of interest related to those events and CPA.

## **RFP SCHEDULE**

The deadline for RFP responses is no later than 4:00 pm, November 30, 2020. No proposals will be accepted after that time. Proposals will be provided in electronic format (PDF preferred) and emailed to: [jeff.hanley@commonwealthpreventionalliance.org](mailto:jeff.hanley@commonwealthpreventionalliance.org).

This schedule of events represents the organizing committee's best estimate of the schedule that will be followed for this RFP.

- November 9, 2020: Requests for Proposal Open
- November 30, 2020: Requests for Proposal Closed
- December 7, 2020: Applicant Selected (all applicants who follow application instructions will be notified)
- December 14, 2020 to July 31, 2021: Contract Period
- The conference committee may choose to meet via phone with finalists for an interview prior to final selection.

Respondents must agree to keep their sample budget, production timeline, and the other terms of their engagement open for at least thirty (45) days past the submission deadline. By submitting a Proposal, the

respondent acknowledges they have read this RFP, understands it, and agrees to be bound by its requirements.

Once a respondent is selected, the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance and the selected respondent must execute a written contract. The respondent agrees that the contract will be the complete and exclusive statement of the agreement between the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance and the Respondent and will supersede all communications between the parties regarding the respondent's subject matter. Should the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance and the selected respondent be unable to agree on terms of a contract within a reasonable time (at CPA's discretion), the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance reserves the right to suspend or terminate negotiations without advance notice, and to pursue negotiations with another respondent to provide the requested services. Any suspension or termination of negotiations shall be without liability to the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance or the selected respondent(s). Alternatively, the Commonwealth Prevention Alliance may terminate this process (in its discretion), and either discontinue this project, or issue a new RFP for the requested services. Each respondent shall assume all fees and costs (including but not limited to legal fees) incurred in responding to this RFP and negotiating a contract with Commonwealth Prevention Alliance. The Commonwealth Prevention Alliance shall bear no liability to any respondent for any costs, fees, or liability incurred in connection with this RFP or any response thereto.