



# Request for Bids

## CALSTART Rebrand Strategy, Identity System, and Brand Governance

### INTRODUCTION

CALSTART is undertaking a comprehensive rebrand to clarify its market position, strengthen consistency across audiences and channels, and equip staff, members, partners, funders, policymakers, and industry stakeholders with a cohesive brand platform. Prior brand audit findings and current-state discovery materials will be provided to the selected agency.

CALSTART is seeking a qualified agency to develop the strategy, messaging, visual identity, governance framework, and practical assets needed to implement the rebrand across the organization and its affiliated programs.

### ABOUT CALSTART

CALSTART is a nonprofit founded in 1992 with offices across North America and Europe. We bring the clean transportation industry together to accelerate innovation, grow the market, and create jobs. We bridge government and industry — with support from our members and partners — to advance and scale affordable clean transportation solutions that cut air pollution and curb climate change. Learn more at [calstart.org](https://calstart.org).

### PROJECT SUMMARY

#### **Project Goal**

To create a cohesive CALSTART rebrand that includes strategy, messaging, visual identity, governance standards, implementation-ready brand assets, and digital brand guidance for consistent use across teams, programs, members, and partners.

#### **Scope of Work**

The selected agency will provide end-to-end rebrand strategy and identity services across the following areas:

- **Brand Discovery and Strategy**
  - Review existing brand audit findings and discovery materials provided by CALSTART.
  - Develop brand positioning, value proposition, and brand platform guidance that can be adapted across audiences and channels.

- Recommend brand architecture guidance for CALSTART, Drive to Zero, and branded programs CALSTART enables.
- Develop audience personas, journey maps, brand promise, and measurable brand equity goals.
- **Messaging and Voice**
  - Develop a messaging framework with core messages, supporting messages, and proof points for priority audiences.
  - Define tone and voice guidelines for key contexts and channels.
  - Provide optional tagline or positioning line recommendations aligned with the brand platform.
  - Create narrative and storytelling guidelines, including pillars, arcs, and examples.
  - Develop elevator pitch language and concise overviews for the organization, initiatives, funders, policymakers, and industry audiences.
  - Provide channel-specific messaging guidance for website, social media, email, public relations (PR), and business development.
- **Visual Identity System**
  - Develop a logo system, including primary logo, secondary marks, clear-space rules, minimum sizes, and incorrect usage examples.
  - Define color and typography systems with print, digital, and font usage specifications.
  - Define imagery, photography, iconography, patterns, illustration style, and reusable graphic treatments.
  - Provide user interface (UI) and visual guidelines for digital interfaces, including buttons, forms, and reusable components.
- **Brand Governance and Usage Rules**
  - Create a living brand guidelines document for use across CALSTART teams, members, and partners.
  - Provide asset library structure, naming conventions, versioning, and metadata guidance compatible with CALSTART's asset management approach.
  - Include legal and compliance notes for trademark usage, licensing, and relevant sector considerations.
- **Brand Assets and Templates**
  - Provide implementation-ready brand asset files, including logos, color specifications, and font/licensing details.
  - Use royalty-free and readily accessible fonts whenever possible.
  - Develop collateral, presentation, digital, PR, and media templates for common organizational use cases.
  - Provide photography and illustration guidance or a curated image library aligned with the brand.
- **Digital Ecosystem and Product Branding**

- o Develop website style guide and information architecture recommendations for how the brand appears and is organized online.
- o Provide UI kit and component library guidance for reusable digital deliverables.
- o Ensure digital brand guidance supports current accessibility standards.
- o Ensure digital deliverables are responsive across devices and platforms.

## RFP RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include the following:

### **Agency Profile and Relevant Experience**

- A brief history of your agency, size, and location.
- Resumes or bios of the core team members who will be assigned to this project and references from previous clients for similar services.
- Relevant portfolio examples demonstrating brand strategy, rebranding, visual identity, messaging, governance, templates, and digital implementation experience.

### **Approach and Project Management**

- Proposed approach for delivering the full rebrand scope, including strategy, messaging, visual identity, governance, implementation-ready brand assets, and digital brand guidance.
- Project timeline, milestones, and collaboration model for working with CALSTART leadership, marketing, teams, programs, members, and partners as appropriate.
- Process for stakeholder input, review cycles, decision-making, and phased implementation.
- Plan for translating strategy into usable guidelines, implementation-ready brand assets, templates, and governance tools.
- Strategy for managing adoption across teams, programs, members, and partners.
- Response times and support approach for review cycles, implementation questions, and time-sensitive requests.

### **Project Cost and Budget**

- Provide a not-to-exceed estimate for delivering the rebrand scope of services described above.

- Detailed estimates should include anticipated personnel costs, direct costs, costs related to strategy, design, template production, and implementation support for the rebrand.
- Provide a comprehensive fully-burdened Hourly Rate Card for relevant roles, such as brand strategist, creative director, designer, copywriter, project manager, digital strategist, and accessibility or UX specialist.
- List any assumptions related to the project cost and budget.

## Timeline and Key Dates

Activity	Target Date
RFP Release Date	June 22, 2026
Deadline for Submission of Questions	July 1, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	July 13, 2026
Agency Selection and Notification	August 3, 2026
Public Rebrand Announcement	September 2026

Questions will be asked and answered via [GoogleDoc](#). CALSTART will provide clarification on any material included in this RFP but will not provide any new or additional information.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be evaluated on the agency's ability to deliver strategic brand thinking, a cohesive visual and verbal brand system, practical governance tools, implementation-ready brand assets, and a clear delivery plan. The proposer who provides best value in consideration of price and the weighted technical factors in the table below will be selected for award.

The Company reserves the right to make a single award, multiple awards, or no award at all as a result of this RFP. Proposals may be accepted or rejected in whole or in part, and deliverables may be split among multiple agencies if it is deemed in the best strategic interest of the project.



Criteria	Weight (Max Points)
Brand Strategy and Messaging	25
Visual Identity and Digital Brand System	20
Governance, Adoption, Accessibility, and Implementation Readiness	25
Project Management, Staffing, and Timeline	15
References from previous clients for similar work	10
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>95</b>

Cost/price will be evaluated as part of the overall best-value determination and tradeoff analysis and may be determinative where a higher-rated proposal does not offer value commensurate with its price.

## HOW TO SUBMIT

Please submit a brief proposal that addresses the RFP Response Requirements listed above.

Submit to:  
[digital@calstart.org](mailto:digital@calstart.org)

Proposals will be reviewed by CALSTART marketing team members.