DORCHESTER SENIORS, INC.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Fundraising and Grant Development Consulting Services

Issued by	Dorchester Seniors, Inc.
RFP issue date	July 26, 2026
Written questions due	August 7, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Responses issued	August 11, 2026
Proposals due	August 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time
Anticipated selection	August 31, 2026
Anticipated start date	September 8, 2026
Initial contract period	Six months, with the possibility of renewal

Primary Contact

Melodi Amos, Executive Assistant
Mamos@dorchesterseniors.com
Dorchester County, South Carolina

Solicitation Overview

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. invites qualified fundraising consultants, fractional development professionals, and consulting firms to submit proposals for strategic and hands-on fundraising and grant development services. The selected consultant will help strengthen and diversify organizational revenue while building sustainable internal systems and staff capacity.

1. Organizational Overview

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. is a nonprofit organization serving adults throughout Dorchester County, South Carolina.

The organization provides programs and services designed to help adults remain healthy, independent, connected, and engaged in their communities. Services include nutrition, transportation, wellness and fitness, social engagement, community access, resource navigation, outreach, home support, rural services, and healthy-aging initiatives.

As Dorchester Seniors, Inc. continues to grow and expand its community impact, the organization seeks to strengthen and diversify its revenue through grants, individual giving, major gifts, corporate sponsorships, fundraising campaigns, strategic partnerships, and other charitable support.

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. is seeking an experienced consultant or consulting firm to provide both strategic development leadership and hands-on fundraising and grant-development services.

2. Purpose of the RFP

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to identify a qualified fundraising and grant-development consultant or firm that can help Dorchester Seniors, Inc.:

1. Develop a comprehensive and sustainable fundraising strategy.
2. Expand foundation, corporate, state, federal, and local grant funding.
3. Strengthen individual and major-donor fundraising.
4. Develop corporate sponsorship and partnership opportunities.
5. Improve donor cultivation, stewardship, retention, and acknowledgment.
6. Establish effective development systems, procedures, calendars, and performance measures.
7. Increase the fundraising capacity of staff, organizational leadership, and the Board of Directors.
8. Diversify revenue and reduce dependence on any single funding source.
9. Build internal systems that can be sustained beyond the consulting engagement.

The selected consultant will work closely with the Chief Executive Officer, Marketing and Development Director, leadership team, program staff, finance staff, and Board of Directors.

3. Scope of Services

A. Fundraising Assessment and Strategy

10. Review existing fundraising activities, funding sources, donor records, sponsorships, grant portfolios, and development practices.
11. Identify strengths, gaps, risks, and opportunities within the current fundraising structure.
12. Develop a practical fundraising and revenue-diversification plan.

13. Recommend realistic short-term and long-term fundraising priorities.
14. Establish fundraising goals, strategies, timelines, responsibilities, and performance measures.
15. Identify the most appropriate fundraising opportunities based on organizational capacity and mission alignment.

B. Grant Research and Prospect Development

16. Research foundation, corporate, state, federal, and local grant opportunities.
17. Identify opportunities that align with Dorchester Seniors, Inc.'s mission, programs, service area, and strategic priorities.
18. Evaluate eligibility, competitiveness, funding restrictions, reporting requirements, and organizational capacity.
19. Develop and maintain a prioritized grant-prospect list.
20. Create and maintain a grant calendar that includes application, reporting, renewal, and internal preparation deadlines.
21. Recommend which grant opportunities Dorchester Seniors, Inc. should pursue.

C. Grant Writing and Submission

22. Prepare letters of inquiry, concept papers, grant applications, narratives, executive summaries, and supporting documents.
23. Work with staff to collect program data, financial information, budgets, organizational documents, and required attachments.
24. Develop persuasive, accurate, and mission-aligned proposals.
25. Assist with program design, goals, objectives, outcomes, evaluation measures, and sustainability plans.
26. Coordinate internal review and approval before submission.
27. Submit applications when authorized by Dorchester Seniors, Inc.
28. Maintain organized copies of submitted applications and supporting documentation.
29. Track pending, awarded, declined, and renewed grants.

D. Grant Reporting and Compliance Support

30. Maintain grant-reporting and renewal schedules.
31. Coordinate with program and finance staff to collect required information.
32. Draft or review narrative reports, outcome reports, expenditure summaries, and renewal requests.
33. Communicate grant commitments and requirements to responsible staff.
34. Identify potential compliance concerns or reporting risks.
35. Support the development of internal grant-management procedures.
36. Assist with grant closeout and renewal planning when applicable.

Final responsibility for financial records, program compliance, authorized submissions, and grant administration will remain with Dorchester Seniors, Inc.

E. Individual Giving and Major Gifts

37. Develop strategies to increase individual giving.
38. Assist with donor segmentation, cultivation, solicitation, acknowledgment, retention, and stewardship.

39. Recommend annual-giving, recurring-giving, major-gift, memorial-gift, tribute-gift, and planned-giving strategies.
40. Help identify prospective major donors and relationship-building opportunities.
41. Develop donor communications, cases for support, campaign messages, solicitation materials, and stewardship plans.
42. Prepare leadership and board members for donor meetings and solicitations.

F. Corporate Sponsorships and Partnerships

43. Identify prospective corporate sponsors and community partners.
44. Develop sponsorship levels, benefits, proposals, packages, and outreach strategies.
45. Assist with sponsorship requests for programs, events, campaigns, facilities, transportation, nutrition, wellness, and community initiatives.
46. Recommend strategies to convert one-time sponsors into long-term partners.
47. Establish procedures for tracking sponsorship commitments, benefits, recognition, and renewals.

G. Fundraising Campaigns and Special Initiatives

48. Assist with the planning and implementation of annual fundraising campaigns.
49. Recommend campaign themes, audiences, timelines, goals, messages, and solicitation strategies.
50. Provide strategic support for fundraising events and special initiatives.
51. Evaluate proposed events and campaigns for potential return on investment.
52. Assist with donor follow-up and post-campaign stewardship.
53. Support capital, program, capacity-building, or special-project campaigns when requested.

H. Board and Leadership Development

54. Provide fundraising guidance to the Chief Executive Officer and leadership team.
55. Clarify the fundraising roles of staff, leadership, and the Board of Directors.
56. Provide board fundraising education or training when requested.
57. Develop talking points, donor-engagement guidance, outreach tools, and fundraising materials for board members.
58. Recommend practical ways for board members to participate in fundraising, relationship development, and community engagement.

I. Development Systems and Procedures

59. Recommend appropriate donor-management and grant-tracking systems.
60. Establish consistent processes for donor entry, acknowledgment, follow-up, stewardship, grant management, and reporting.
61. Develop templates, procedures, checklists, calendars, and tracking tools.
62. Recommend fundraising dashboards and reports for leadership and the Board.
63. Build internal capacity so Dorchester Seniors, Inc. does not become permanently dependent on the consultant.

4. Anticipated Deliverables

During the initial six-month engagement, the selected consultant should be prepared to provide:

64. An initial fundraising and development assessment.
65. A 30-, 60-, 90-, and 180-day work plan.

66. A six-month fundraising implementation plan.
67. A longer-term fundraising and revenue-diversification strategy.
68. A prioritized grant-prospect list.
69. A grant application, reporting, and renewal calendar.
70. Grant applications, letters of inquiry, concept papers, or proposals as agreed upon with Dorchester Seniors, Inc.
71. An individual-donor and major-gift strategy.
72. A corporate sponsorship and partnership strategy.
73. Recommendations for annual and recurring giving.
74. Fundraising procedures, templates, and tracking tools.
75. Monthly progress reports.
76. A summary of proposals submitted, dollars requested, funds awarded, pending opportunities, declined proposals, and upcoming deadlines.
77. Recommendations for the next phase of fundraising and development.
78. Training and knowledge transfer for appropriate Dorchester Seniors, Inc. staff and board members.

The final scope and deliverables may be adjusted during contract negotiations.

5. Desired Qualifications

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. seeks a consultant or firm with:

79. Demonstrated success in nonprofit fundraising and grant development.
80. Experience developing comprehensive fundraising strategies.
81. Experience writing competitive foundation, corporate, state, or federal grant applications.
82. Knowledge of individual giving, major gifts, sponsorships, donor stewardship, and fundraising campaigns.
83. Strong writing, editing, research, communication, and project-management skills.
84. Experience working with nonprofit chief executives, development staff, finance staff, program staff, and boards of directors.
85. Ability to manage multiple deadlines and projects.
86. Knowledge of grant compliance, restricted funding, reporting, and documentation requirements.
87. Ability to work independently while communicating consistently with organizational leadership.
88. Experience with donor-management or customer-relationship-management systems.
89. Ability to protect confidential donor, client, employee, financial, and organizational information.
90. Strong professional references.

Experience in one or more of the following areas is preferred:

- Aging or senior services
- Human services
- Healthcare
- Nutrition
- Transportation
- Rural services
- Social connection
- Community development
- Publicly funded programs

- Government partnerships
- South Carolina nonprofit organizations

A bachelor's degree or equivalent professional experience is preferred. Advanced degrees, fundraising credentials, grant-writing certifications, or related professional credentials are beneficial but not required.

6. Proposal Requirements

A. Cover Letter

91. Provide a brief introduction, statement of interest, and explanation of why the consultant or firm is a strong fit for Dorchester Seniors, Inc.

B. Consultant or Firm Background

Include:

92. Legal name of the consultant or firm.
93. Business address.
94. Primary contact person.
95. Telephone number.
96. Email address.
97. Website, if applicable.
98. Number of years providing fundraising or grant-development services.
99. Business structure.
100. Names and qualifications of all individuals who would perform the work.

C. Relevant Experience

Describe experience with:

101. Nonprofit fundraising strategy.
102. Grant research and writing.
103. Foundation, corporate, government, or public funding.
104. Individual giving and major gifts.
105. Corporate sponsorships.
106. Fundraising campaigns.
107. Board fundraising support.
108. Organizations similar in size, mission, or complexity to Dorchester Seniors, Inc.

D. Proposed Approach

Describe:

109. How the consultant would begin the engagement.
110. The proposed approach for assessing Dorchester Seniors, Inc.'s fundraising capacity.
111. How funding opportunities would be identified and prioritized.
112. How the consultant would coordinate with staff and leadership.
113. How progress would be tracked and reported.
114. How the consultant would balance strategic planning with hands-on execution.
115. How knowledge would be transferred to staff.
116. The consultant's proposed priorities for the first 30, 60, 90, and 180 days.

E. Proposed Work Plan

Provide a six-month work plan that includes:

117. Major activities.
118. Deliverables.
119. Anticipated timelines.
120. Expected participation from Dorchester Seniors, Inc. staff.
121. Estimated monthly hours.
122. Availability for meetings.
123. Proposed communication and reporting schedule.

F. Fees

Provide a clear fee proposal, including one or more of the following:

124. Monthly retainer.
125. Hourly rate and anticipated monthly hours.
126. Fixed project fees.
127. Not-to-exceed amount.
128. Reimbursable expenses.
129. Travel costs.
130. Additional charges or optional services.

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. prefers a monthly retainer, fixed fee, hourly rate with a maximum amount, or another clearly defined professional-services arrangement.

Compensation based on a percentage of grants, sponsorships, gifts, or charitable contributions will not be considered.

G. References

Provide at least three professional references from nonprofit organizations for which similar services have been provided. For each reference, include:

131. Organization name.
132. Contact name and title.
133. Telephone number.
134. Email address.
135. Description of services provided.
136. Dates of engagement.

H. Work Samples

Provide at least two relevant writing samples with confidential information removed. Samples may include:

- Grant narratives
- Letters of inquiry
- Cases for support
- Sponsorship proposals
- Fundraising plans
- Campaign materials
- Donor communications

I. Results

Provide examples of measurable fundraising or grant-development results. Clearly distinguish between:

- Work personally completed by the consultant
- Work completed by a team
- Funds requested
- Funds awarded
- Campaign revenue
- Pledges
- In-kind support
- Multi-year commitments

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. recognizes that consultants cannot guarantee grant awards or charitable contributions.

J. Conflicts of Interest

137. Disclose any actual, potential, or perceived conflicts of interest, including work with organizations that may compete for the same funding opportunities.

K. Exceptions

138. Identify any requested exceptions or proposed changes to the scope, requirements, or anticipated contract terms.

7. Proposed Contract Structure

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. anticipates an initial six-month independent contractor agreement beginning on or around September 8, 2026.

The contract may be renewed, extended, expanded, reduced, or discontinued based on:

139. Performance.
140. Organizational needs.
141. Available funding.
142. Quality and timeliness of deliverables.
143. Responsiveness and communication.
144. Progress toward fundraising goals.
145. Compliance with contract requirements.
146. Mutual agreement.

The selected consultant will not be considered an employee of Dorchester Seniors, Inc. The consultant will be responsible for applicable taxes, insurance, licenses, business expenses, and other independent contractor obligations.

The selected consultant may be required to provide:

- Completed Form W-9
- Proof of professional or general liability insurance
- Applicable business license
- Signed confidentiality agreement
- Signed conflict-of-interest disclosure

- Signed independent contractor agreement
- Background information or screening when appropriate

8. Performance Expectations

The selected consultant will be expected to:

147. Meet agreed-upon deadlines.
148. Provide accurate, complete, and professional work products.
149. Communicate regularly with Dorchester Seniors, Inc.'s designated contact.
150. Attend scheduled meetings.
151. Promptly disclose delays, risks, or concerns.
152. Maintain organized records of work performed.
153. Protect confidential information.
154. Follow Dorchester Seniors, Inc.'s approval procedures.
155. Obtain authorization before submitting proposals or making commitments on behalf of the organization.
156. Avoid representing that funding is guaranteed.
157. Provide adequate notice when staff information, financial information, attachments, or approvals are needed.
158. Follow professional and ethical fundraising standards.

Performance may be evaluated based on:

- Quality of strategy and recommendations
- Number and quality of qualified funding opportunities identified
- Timeliness of submissions
- Quality and accuracy of grant applications
- Dollars requested
- Dollars awarded
- Donor and sponsor engagement
- Development systems established
- Staff and board capacity strengthened
- Responsiveness and communication
- Completion of agreed-upon deliverables

Funding outcomes will not be the sole measure of performance because award decisions are controlled by external funders and donors.

9. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Proposals may be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Category	Weight
Relevant nonprofit fundraising experience	20%
Grant-writing experience and demonstrated results	20%

Evaluation Category	Weight
Proposed approach and six-month work plan	20%
Understanding of Dorchester Seniors, Inc. and related service areas	15%
Donor, corporate, and sponsorship-development experience	10%
Cost and overall value	10%
References, communication, and organizational fit	5%
Total	**100%**

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. is not required to select the lowest-priced proposal. Qualifications, approach, capacity, experience, value, and organizational fit will be considered.

Selected respondents may be invited to participate in interviews or presentations.

10. RFP Schedule

Activity	Date
RFP issued and posted	July 26, 2026
Written questions due	August 7, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET
DSI responses to questions issued	August 11, 2026
Proposals due	August 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. ET
Proposal review	August 24–26, 2026
Finalist interviews, if needed	August 27–28, 2026
Anticipated selection	August 31, 2026
Contract negotiation and execution	August 31–September 4, 2026
Anticipated start date	September 8, 2026

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. reserves the right to modify this schedule.

11. Questions

Questions concerning this RFP must be submitted in writing by August 7, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time.

Contact	Melodi Amos, Executive Assistant
Email	Mamos@dorchesterseniors.com
Subject line	Question Regarding Fundraising and Grant Development RFP

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. intends to issue written responses to material questions by August 11, 2026. Responses may be distributed to all known prospective respondents to support a fair and consistent process. The identity of the individual or firm submitting a question may be withheld.

12. Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format.

Submit to	Mamos@dorchesterseniors.com
Attention	Melodi Amos, Executive Assistant
Subject line	Fundraising and Grant Development Consulting Proposal
Deadline	August 21, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

Late proposals may not be considered. Proposals should be organized in the order requested in this RFP. Receipt of a proposal does not constitute acceptance or create any obligation on behalf of Dorchester Seniors, Inc.

13. Reservation of Rights

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. reserves the right to:

159. Accept or reject any or all proposals.
160. Cancel, revise, or reissue this RFP.
161. Request clarification or additional information.
162. Waive minor informalities or technicalities.
163. Conduct interviews or request presentations.
164. Verify references, credentials, experience, and reported results.
165. Negotiate scope, schedule, fees, and contract terms.
166. Select one consultant, multiple consultants, or no consultant.
167. Award only part of the requested scope.
168. Discontinue negotiations if acceptable terms cannot be reached.
169. Consider proposals received through other lawful solicitation methods.
170. Make an award based on the proposal determined to provide the best overall value.

Issuance of this RFP does not obligate Dorchester Seniors, Inc. to award a contract or reimburse costs incurred in preparing or submitting a proposal.

14. Confidentiality and Ownership

The selected consultant must protect confidential information related to Dorchester Seniors, Inc., including information concerning:

- Members and clients
- Donors and prospective donors
- Employees and volunteers
- Board members
- Financial records
- Grant applications
- Contracts
- Strategic plans
- Programs and operations
- Passwords and technology systems
- Proprietary documents and materials

All final work products created specifically for and paid for by Dorchester Seniors, Inc. under the contract will become the property of Dorchester Seniors, Inc., unless otherwise provided in the final agreement.

The consultant may not use Dorchester Seniors, Inc.'s name, logo, data, work products, proposals, results, or confidential information for promotional purposes without prior written authorization.

15. Equal Opportunity

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. is committed to equal opportunity and encourages proposals from qualified consultants and firms representing diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Selection decisions will be made without unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

16. Proposal Checklist

- ☐ Cover letter
- ☐ Consultant or firm background
- ☐ Relevant nonprofit experience
- ☐ Fundraising and grant-development experience
- ☐ Proposed approach
- ☐ 30-, 60-, 90-, and 180-day priorities
- ☐ Six-month work plan
- ☐ Estimated monthly hours and availability
- ☐ Proposed fees
- ☐ Three professional references
- ☐ At least two writing samples

- ☐ Examples of measurable results
- ☐ Conflict-of-interest disclosure
- ☐ Identification of all individuals who will perform the work
- ☐ Any proposed exceptions to the RFP or contract terms

17. Authorized Organizational Contact

The selected consultant will report to and receive direction from the Chief Executive Officer or the Chief Executive Officer's authorized designee.

The consultant may collaborate with staff and board members but may not submit applications, solicit funds in the organization's name, execute agreements, make commitments, or represent Dorchester Seniors, Inc. without appropriate authorization.

Dorchester Seniors, Inc. appreciates your interest in helping us expand the resources necessary to serve adults throughout Dorchester County and advance our mission.