



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

Strategic Marketing, Brand, and Communications Partner - NY State of Cider Campaign

Issued By: New York Cider Association (NYCA)

Date Issued: July 20, 2026

Proposal Due Date: By 5:00pm, Friday, August 7, 2026

Proposal Format: PDF submitted via email

(6 pages maximum excluding cover letter, resumes of team members, references, and work samples.)

Anticipated Contract Value / Term: Approximately \$70,000 / One Year Term

Contact email for questions & submissions: info@newyorkcider.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The New York Cider Association (NYCA) is seeking a strategic marketing, brand, and communications partner to help establish New York as THE State of Cider. This is an opportunity to build one of the nation's most distinctive agricultural and craft beverage brands. Working alongside NYCA, the selected partner will help unify existing programs under a single statewide identity, develop a long-term marketing strategy, guide creative direction, elevate public awareness, strengthen consumer engagement, and position New York as America's premier cider destination. Rather than acting as a traditional agency of record, the selected partner will serve as an extension of NYCA's team, providing strategic leadership, creative expertise, and integrated communications support across multiple initiatives throughout the year.

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

The New York Cider Association (NYCA) is the statewide trade association representing New York's hard cider industry. Our mission is to cultivate the NY Cider industry by supporting producers, strengthening market opportunities, educating consumers, and connecting every part of the cider ecosystem, from orchard to glass. Over the past decade, New York has become a leading cider producing state in the nation, with more than 140 licensed hard cider producers, over 500 apple orchards, and a vibrant network of growers, restaurants, retailers, tourism partners, educators, and consumers. The next chapter is even more ambitious. NYCA is launching the "NY State of Cider" campaign, a comprehensive statewide marketing platform designed to position New York as America's premier cider destination while increasing consumer awareness, industry participation, tourism, and sales of NY Cider. We are seeking a strategic partner to help bring this vision to life.

PROJECT VISION

NYCA is seeking a highly collaborative, entrepreneurial marketing and communications partner who can function as an extension of our team. The selected partner will provide strategic leadership, creative direction, brand development, communications planning, and marketing execution while working closely with NYCA's Executive Director and staff.

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

New York has become the nation's leading cider producing state, yet many consumers remain unaware of the remarkable people, orchards, and craftsmanship behind every glass of NY Cider. Together, we have an opportunity to change that. This campaign is about more than marketing. It is about strengthening agriculture, supporting local businesses, driving tourism, celebrating craftsmanship, and inspiring more people to discover, enjoy, and support New York cider made from New York apples. We believe New York can be recognized as The State of Cider. Achieving that vision will require bold thinking, authentic storytelling, strategic collaboration, and creative excellence.



CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVES

The selected partner will help NYCA:

- Position New York as THE State of Cider.
- Increase awareness of NY Cider among consumers.
- Strengthen recognition of the NY Cider brand and NY Cider Mark.
- Increase visitation to orchards, cideries, festivals, and tourism destinations.
- Increase consumer engagement across digital platforms.
- Increase restaurant and retail participation.
- Strengthen producer participation throughout NYCA programs.
- Generate earned media and statewide visibility.
- Support long-term growth in sales of New York produced hard cider.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected partner will provide strategic leadership, creative direction, and campaign frameworks across five key areas. To maximize the impact of the budget, the partner will focus on overarching strategy, brand architecture, messaging playbooks, and reusable campaign toolkits. Day-to-day tactical execution (such as community management, daily social media posting, and local event logistics) will be managed and executed by NYCA's internal team and committee resources.

Brand Leadership

Develop a cohesive brand identity that unifies the NY State of Cider campaign and related initiatives through consistent messaging, visual direction, and brand standards.

Marketing Strategy

Develop an annual marketing roadmap with quarterly campaigns, editorial planning, communications strategy, social media direction, and recommendations for paid media investments.

Creative & Communications

Provide ongoing creative support including graphic design, campaign assets, website guidance, email marketing, copywriting, social media planning, and content distribution strategies that maximize the impact of NYCA generated content.

Public Relations & Campaign Support

Develop strategies that increase statewide and national visibility through media relations, storytelling, press outreach, and promotional support for NYCA's integrated NY State of Cider Platform including NY Cider Festivals, New York Cider Week, NY Cider from Orchard to Table Restaurant Program, NY Cider Trail App & Passport Club, NY Cider Table Video & Podcast Series, and the NY Cider Mark.

Strategic Partnership

Serve as an extension of the NYCA team through ongoing consultation, monthly planning meetings, campaign management, project coordination, and performance reporting.

EXISTING ASSETS

NYCA has invested significantly in building the foundation for this campaign. Existing assets include:

- Established statewide brand recognition within the industry
- Active social media platforms
- Website and digital infrastructure
- NY Cider Trail App
- Existing photography and video library
- Original video and podcast content



- Annual festivals and statewide events
- Established producer relationships
- Media relationships
- Email marketing platform
- Consumer facing educational initiatives

DESIRED OUTCOMES

NYCA is seeking a partner who can help strengthen awareness, engagement, and long-term growth across the New York cider ecosystem. Proposals should describe how success will be measured and may include recommendations related to:

- Consumer awareness of NY Cider
- Website and social media engagement
- Growth of email and digital audiences
- NY Cider Trail App engagement & Passport Club participation
- Restaurant and producer education and participation
- Tourism and tasting room visitation
- Earned media and public relations
- Consumer demand and sales of New York produced hard cider

INITIAL DELIVERABLES

Within the first 90 days, the selected partner will develop a Strategic Marketing Framework that includes:

- Brand and messaging recommendations
- Annual marketing roadmap
- Campaign calendar
- Communications strategy
- Social media strategy
- Public relations approach
- Measurement framework

This framework will guide NYCA's marketing efforts throughout the year.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

As part of your proposal, please describe your vision for establishing New York as The State of Cider.

Your response should include:

- How would you spend the first 90 days?
- What opportunities excite you most?
- How would you prioritize the campaign objectives?
- What does success look like after one year?

In addition, please include:

- Agency overview with relevant experience and case studies
- Proposed approach with a timeline and work plan
- Project team and budget
- Three references

To respect respondents' time, we're looking for your agency's high-level strategic methodology and approach to these campaign questions rather than fully executed creative concepts.



BUDGET

NYCA anticipates entering into a one-year agreement valued at approximately \$70,000.

Respondents are encouraged to recommend the staffing structure, work plan, and allocation of services they believe will maximize impact while functioning as an extension of the NYCA team.

As a Statewide agricultural trade association supporting local growers and craft producers, NYCA welcomes proposals from agencies offering specialized non-profit, commodity board, or volume-discounted rates. In turn, this campaign offers the selected partner high-profile visibility and unique business development exposure across hundreds of New York craft beverage brands, agricultural orchards, and hospitality groups. Please note, the \$70,000 budget is dedicated entirely to agency professional fees; any paid media spend, printing, and hard production costs will be budgeted separately by NYCA.

TIMELINE

RFP Issued: July 20, 2026

Questions Due: No later than 5:00pm, July 29, 2026

Responses to Questions Issued: No later than 5:00pm, July 31, 2026

Proposals Due: No later than 5:00pm, August 7, 2026

Finalist Interviews: August 10, 2026 – August 26, 2026

Partner Selected: August 28, 2026

Project Begins: September 1, 2026

All questions and submissions should be emailed to info@newyorkcider.org.

SELECTION PROCESS

Finalists may be invited to participate in an interview and presentation with NYCA leadership.

Selection will be based on overall strategic fit, relevant experience, creativity, collaborative approach, and demonstrated ability to execute within the proposed budget.

WHO YOU ARE

We're looking for more than a marketing agency. We're looking for a strategic partner to help build one of New York's most distinctive agricultural brands. Your firm shares our vision, brings fresh thinking, and is excited to help write the next chapter of the NY Cider story. Your team combines strategic thinking with hands-on execution and understands that great marketing begins with authentic storytelling. Your agency has a deep understanding of the culinary world, agritourism, craft beverages, hospitality, and consumer behavior, with experience building brands that connect people to products, places, and experiences. Most importantly, you're entrepreneurial, collaborative, responsive, and energized by the opportunity to help establish New York as The State of Cider. If you're inspired by the opportunity to shape a statewide brand with lasting impact, we invite you to submit a proposal and join us in telling the story of NY Cider.