

Request for Proposals

State of Innovation Day 2026

Event Production, Logistics, and Execution Services

Issued by: Innovate Alabama

RFP Release Date: August 24, 2026

Proposal Submission Deadline: September 1, 2026

Anticipated Event Date: TBD (will be finalized upon Keynote Speaker confirmation; either early November/December)

Event Location: Birmingham, AL

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Innovate Alabama invites qualified event production firms to submit proposals to support the production, logistics and execution of **State of Innovation Day 2026**, Innovate Alabama's annual celebration of innovation and entrepreneurship across the state.

State of Innovation Day brings together entrepreneurs, investors, business and community leaders, educators, policymakers, ecosystem partners and other stakeholders to celebrate Alabama's progress, showcase the people and organizations advancing innovation, and build momentum for the future.

Innovate Alabama seeks an experienced, highly organized and solutions-oriented production partner capable of translating the organization's creative vision into a professionally executed event experience.

Innovate Alabama will retain ownership and leadership of the event's vision, concepts, programming, content, creative direction and attendee experience. The selected partner will work closely with Innovate Alabama to operationalize that vision, providing the production expertise, logistical management, vendor coordination and on-site execution necessary to bring the event to life.

The ideal partner will understand how to support a highly creative internal team: listening carefully to the intended vision, identifying what is required to execute it successfully, anticipating logistical or production challenges, recommending practical solutions, and delivering with excellence.

ABOUT INNOVATE ALABAMA

Innovate Alabama is Alabama's first statewide public-private partnership focused on entrepreneurship, technology and innovation. Through its programs, partnerships and investments, Innovate Alabama works to help entrepreneurs, businesses, communities and talent access the resources and opportunities needed to thrive in Alabama.

Innovate Alabama's work supports the continued development of a robust statewide innovation ecosystem by investing in entrepreneurs and companies, strengthening communities, expanding access to resources and capital, and developing and connecting the talent that will power Alabama's innovation economy.

Additional information about Innovate Alabama is available at www.innovatealabama.org.



STATE OF INNOVATION DAY

State of Innovation Day serves as Innovate Alabama's annual celebration of the people, companies, communities and organizations moving Alabama's innovation economy forward.

The event is intended to both celebrate progress and look toward the future, creating an experience that demonstrates the breadth, energy and potential of innovation happening throughout Alabama.

Event Objectives

State of Innovation Day should:

- Celebrate significant achievements and progress across Alabama's innovation ecosystem;
- Showcase entrepreneurs, companies, talent, communities and partners contributing to Alabama's innovation economy;
- Communicate the impact and reach of the state's innovation work;
- Convene stakeholders from across Alabama's innovation ecosystem;
- Tell compelling stories about innovation happening throughout the state;
- Create meaningful opportunities for connection and engagement among attendees; and
- Generate excitement and momentum around the future of innovation in Alabama.

Anticipated Event Profile

Event Date: TBD (will be finalized upon Keynote Speaker confirmation; either early November/December)

Location: Birmingham, AL

Estimated Attendance: 350

Anticipated Event Hours: 10 hours runtime

Primary Audiences: Entrepreneurs, investors, business leaders, higher education leaders, students and talent, community and economic development leaders, policymakers, ecosystem partners and other stakeholders.

Innovate Alabama will develop the event's overall concept, agenda, programming and attendee experience. The selected partner will support the successful production and execution of those elements.

High-Level Event Run-of-Show:

8:00 A.M. Check-In and Breakfast

8:30 A.M. Innovate Alabama Board of Directors Q4 Meeting (in an auxiliary room or off-site)
Board meetings are open to the public, but this meeting will likely be attended by a small group.

10:00 A.M. Programming – will include:

- Video content
- Remarks from single speakers
- Keynote luncheon
- Mainstage panels and concurrent sessions in two auxiliary rooms

4:00 P.M. Closing Reception



PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Through this RFP, Innovate Alabama seeks a production partner that can:

- Translate Innovate Alabama’s creative vision and event plans into a comprehensive production and execution strategy;
- Deliver a polished, high-quality event reflective of Innovate Alabama’s standards and brand;
- Provide comprehensive event production and logistical management;
- Proactively manage vendors, timelines, dependencies and production requirements;
- Identify production or logistical challenges and recommend effective solutions;
- Work effectively alongside Innovate Alabama staff and other contracted partners;
- Maintain strong communication, organization and accountability throughout the planning process; and
- Successfully execute all assigned responsibilities on time and within the approved budget.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected partner will be responsible for the **production, operationalization and execution** of the event vision established by Innovate Alabama.

The scope below represents Innovate Alabama’s anticipated needs. Respondents are encouraged to recommend production methods, logistical solutions or operational efficiencies that strengthen execution while maintaining the creative direction established by Innovate Alabama.

1. Production Project Management

The selected partner will work with Innovate Alabama’s designated project lead to develop and manage the production workstream for State of Innovation Day.

Responsibilities may include:

- a. Translate Innovate Alabama’s event plan into a detailed production timeline and work plan;
- b. Participate in recurring planning meetings with Innovate Alabama;
- c. Identify production requirements associated with proposed event concepts and experiences;
- d. Track production milestones, deliverables and dependencies;
- e. Coordinate vendors and contractors within the selected partner’s scope;
- f. Maintain detailed event logistics and production documentation;
- g. Provide regular project status updates;
- h. Identify risks, delays or logistical challenges and recommend solutions;
- i. Develop contingency plans for key event operations;
- j. Coordinate event setup, execution and teardown; and
- k. Maintain clear and consistent communication with Innovate Alabama’s designated project lead.

2. Creative Execution and Production Support

Innovate Alabama will establish the creative direction, event concepts, attendee experiences and brand expression for State of Innovation Day. The selected partner will provide the technical and production expertise necessary to execute those concepts successfully.

Responsibilities may include:

- a. Assess the production feasibility and requirements of concepts developed by Innovate Alabama;
- b. Develop execution plans for approved event concepts and experiences;
- c. Source the materials, equipment, vendors and technical resources required for implementation;
- d. Recommend practical production solutions when budget, venue, schedule or technical limitations affect an approved concept;
- e. Produce and install staging, signage, environmental elements, décor, activations and other approved event components;
- f. Coordinate fabrication and installation of physical event elements;
- g. Ensure consistency and quality across produced event elements; and
- h. Execute all creative elements in accordance with Innovate Alabama's approved direction and brand standards.

3. Venue and Event Logistics

Depending on final event requirements, responsibilities may include:

- a. Coordinate with the selected venue;
- b. Translate Innovate Alabama's desired event flow into functional floor plans;
- c. Coordinate room configurations and seating;
- d. Implement registration and check-in logistics;
- e. Coordinate catering and food-and-beverage logistics;
- f. Coordinate parking, transportation and arrival considerations as applicable;
- g. Coordinate speaker, VIP and staff holding areas;
- h. Support accessibility requirements;
- i. Manage load-in and load-out schedules;
- j. Coordinate rentals, furnishings and physical event needs;
- k. Support security and emergency planning as necessary; and
- l. Identify and resolve venue-related logistical issues

4. Production and Audiovisual Management

The selected partner will coordinate technical production necessary to execute Innovate Alabama's approved program and stage experience.

Services may include:

- a. Stage production;
- b. Audio systems;
- c. Lighting;
- d. Video displays and projection;
- e. Presentation management;
- f. Event recording and/or livestreaming, if requested;
- g. Technical staffing;
- h. Production rehearsals;
- i. Speaker technical support;
- j. Show calling;
- k. Production schedules and cue sheets; and
- l. On-site technical management.

Respondents should clearly identify which production capabilities are provided internally and which would be provided through subcontractors or third-party vendors.

5. **Vendor Coordination**

The selected partner may be responsible for sourcing, coordinating and managing vendors required to execute Innovate Alabama's approved event plan.

Vendor categories may include:

- a. Audiovisual and production;
- b. Rentals;
- c. Fabrication;
- d. Décor and environmental production;
- e. Catering;
- f. Registration;
- g. Signage and printing;
- h. Photography and videography;
- i. Entertainment;
- j. Transportation;
- k. Security; and
- l. Other event services as needed.

Respondents should clearly describe their approach to vendor procurement, contracting, payment and management and identify any fees or markups associated with third-party vendor expenses.

6. **On-Site Event Execution**

The selected partner will provide sufficient on-site staffing and operational leadership to successfully execute the approved event plan.

Responsibilities may include:

- a. Oversee event setup;
- b. Manage vendors and production crews;
- c. Implement approved floor plans and event environments;
- d. Coordinate event logistics;
- e. Support registration and attendee flow;
- f. Coordinate speaker and VIP movement;
- g. Execute production timing and run-of-show;
- h. Troubleshoot operational and technical issues in real time;
- i. Coordinate staff and volunteers as applicable;
- j. Oversee teardown and load-out; and
- k. Serve as the primary event operations point of contact.

7. **Post-Event Closeout**

Following State of Innovation Day, the selected partner may be responsible for:

- a. Completing vendor and production closeout;
- b. Providing final budget reconciliation;
- c. Participating in an event debrief with Innovate Alabama;
- d. Documenting production and logistical lessons learned;
- e. Transferring final production files and assets to Innovate Alabama; and
- f. Providing a final post-event summary as requested.

INNOVATE ALABAMA RESPONSIBILITIES

Innovate Alabama will serve as the **strategic, creative and content lead** for State of Innovation Day.

The selected production partner should expect to work within and execute against the vision established by Innovate Alabama while contributing technical expertise and executional recommendations.

Innovate Alabama anticipates retaining responsibility for the following:

1. Event Vision and Creative Direction

- a. Establish the overall event vision, theme and objectives;
- b. Develop concepts for the overall attendee experience;
- c. Determine the desired look, feel and atmosphere of the event;
- d. Develop concepts for activations, exhibits and engagement opportunities;
- e. Establish creative direction for staging, environmental elements and event spaces;
- f. Determine how Innovate Alabama programs, partners and stories will be showcased;
- g. Establish brand and messaging standards; and
- h. Provide final creative approval for event elements.

2. Programming and Content

- a. Develop the event agenda and program;
- b. Identify and select speakers, panelists and featured participants;
- c. Manage speaker invitations and relationships;
- d. Develop session concepts and formats;
- e. Develop scripts, talking points and stage content;
- f. Determine stories, organizations and initiatives featured throughout the event;
- g. Develop event messaging and narrative; and
- h. Provide final approval of programming and content.

3. Organizational Project Direction

- a. Serve as the organizational project owner;
- b. Establish overall event milestones and internal deadlines;
- c. Coordinate internal Innovate Alabama stakeholders;
- d. Manage internal decision-making and approvals;
- e. Coordinate leadership and executive engagement;
- f. Maintain oversight of the overall event budget;
- g. Manage the contractual relationship with the selected partner; and
- h. Provide final approval of major decisions and expenditures.

4. Communications and Brand

Innovate Alabama and/or its designated communications partners will maintain responsibility for:

- a. Brand strategy and standards;
- b. Event identity and creative direction;
- c. Event marketing and promotion;
- d. Public relations and media relations;
- e. Social media;
- f. Invitations and attendee communications;
- g. Website and external communications and approval of branded materials.

The selected partner will coordinate closely with Innovate Alabama and its communications partners to ensure all produced materials and physical event elements accurately execute approved brand and creative direction.

ANTICIPATED DELIVERABLES

Deliverables include, but are not limited to:

1. Comprehensive production plan;
2. Master production timeline;
3. Detailed production and event budget;
4. Production feasibility plans for Innovate Alabama-developed concepts;
5. Venue and event floor plans;
6. Vendor management plan;
7. Production and audiovisual plan;
8. Staffing plan;
9. Registration and attendee-flow plan;
10. Fabrication and installation plans, as applicable;
11. Load-in and load-out schedule;
12. Detailed run-of-show;
13. Production cue sheets;
14. Emergency and contingency plans;
15. Final vendor reconciliation;
16. Final event budget reconciliation; and
17. Post-event production summary and recommendations.

The final deliverable schedule will be established with the selected partner following contract execution.

BUDGET AND COST PROPOSAL

Respondents should provide an **estimated total project cost range** based on the scope of services outlined in this RFP and the respondent's recommended approach to production and execution.

The proposed range should reflect the respondent's current understanding of the engagement and should clearly identify any assumptions that could materially affect final pricing.

At minimum, the cost proposal should include:

1. Estimated total project cost range;
2. Professional and/or agency fees;
3. Production project management fees;
4. Audiovisual and technical production;
5. Fabrication;
6. Rentals;

7. Décor and environmental production;
8. Event staffing;
9. Travel and related expenses;
10. Subcontractor expenses;
11. Other anticipated third-party expenses;
12. Contingency; and
13. Optional or recommended additional services.

Respondents should clearly identify which costs are included within the proposed range, which costs are estimates or allowances, and any services or expenses that are excluded.

Respondents must also disclose any administrative fees, commissions or markups applied to subcontractor or third-party vendor expenses.

Final scope and pricing will be negotiated with the selected respondent following award and prior to contract execution.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

To facilitate consistent evaluation, respondents should organize proposals using the following structure:

1. **Executive Summary**
Provide a concise overview of the firm, proposed approach and reasons the firm is well suited to support State of Innovation Day.
2. **Firm Overview**
Provide relevant background on the organization, including years in operation, location, core capabilities and primary areas of expertise.
3. **Understanding of the Engagement**
Describe your understanding of State of Innovation Day, Innovate Alabama's objectives and the role of an execution-focused production partner working alongside an internal creative and content team.
4. **Production and Execution Approach**
Describe how your firm would translate an established event vision into a detailed production and execution plan.

Include information regarding:

- a. Production project management;
- b. Client communication;
- c. Production planning;
- d. Vendor management;
- e. Audiovisual and technical production;
- f. Fabrication and installation;
- g. Quality control;
- h. Risk management;
- i. Budget management; and
- j. On-site execution.



5. **Creative Collaboration Approach**

Describe how your firm works with clients that maintain internal ownership of creative direction.

Provide examples of how your team has successfully translated client-developed concepts into executable solutions, including instances in which your team identified production challenges or recommended alternative methods while preserving the client's original creative intent.

6. **Project Team**

Identify key personnel who would be assigned to the engagement, including:

- a. Name;
- b. Role;
- c. Relevant experience;
- d. Anticipated responsibilities; and
- e. Estimated level of involvement.

Identify the individual who would serve as the primary day-to-day contact for Innovate Alabama.

7. **Relevant Experience**

Provide examples of at least **three comparable events or engagements**, with particular emphasis on the firm's production and execution responsibilities.

Examples involving the following are particularly relevant:

- a. Large-scale convenings;
- b. High-profile or VIP participants;
- c. Public-private organizations;
- d. Government or economic development organizations;
- e. Entrepreneurship or technology events;
- f. Complex event production;
- g. Custom fabrication or event environments; or
- h. Execution of client-developed creative concepts.

For each example, respondents should clearly distinguish the work performed by the respondent from work performed by the client or other partners.

8. **References**

Provide contact information for at least **three client references** for relevant work completed within the past three years.

9. **Upcoming Events**

Provide dates for any upcoming events (within 14 – 21 days) that the respondent's firm is producing.

10. **Proposed Timeline**

Provide a high-level project timeline demonstrating the respondent's anticipated production process from contract execution through event closeout.

11. **Cost Proposal**

Provide the detailed budget described in the "Budget and Cost Proposal" section.

12. **Subcontractors and Partners**

Identify any known subcontractors or external partners anticipated for the engagement and describe their roles.



13. Assumptions and Exclusions

Clearly identify any assumptions, limitations or services that the respondent believes are outside the proposed scope.

Proposals should not exceed **10 pages at a minimum of 11 pt font**, excluding appendices, work samples, resumes and provided legal documentation.

Proposals should be **complete and self-contained**. Innovate Alabama will evaluate and score respondents solely on the information and materials included within the submitted proposal. External links, including links to websites, portfolios, videos, case studies or other supplemental materials, **will not be accessed or considered** as part of the evaluation process. Respondents should ensure that all information, examples and supporting materials they wish to be considered are incorporated directly into the proposal or permitted appendices.

EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Innovate Alabama intends to evaluate proposals based on the overall strength and value of the proposed engagement rather than price alone. Proposals will initially be evaluated using the following criteria:

Evaluation Criterion	Weight
Understanding of Innovate Alabama and the Engagement	10%
Production & Execution Approach	25%
Relevant Production Experience & Qualifications	20%
Project Team & Project Management Approach	15%
Ability to Execute Client-Developed Creative Concepts	10%
Budget & Overall Value	15%
References & Demonstrated Performance	5%

Innovate Alabama may invite a limited number of respondents to advance to a finalist stage, which may include interviews and/or presentations, as well as observation of a respondent-produced event, before making a final selection.

Innovate Alabama is particularly interested in identifying a partner that demonstrates both **executorial excellence and respect for client-led creative direction**.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals must be received no later than:

5:00 P.M. CST on September 1, 2026

Proposals should be submitted via Innovate Alabama's event RFP form to:

<https://bit.ly/innovaterfp>

Proposals should be submitted as a single PDF document unless otherwise specified.

Late or incomplete submissions may not be considered.



DESIRED PARTNER QUALITIES

Innovate Alabama seeks a production partner that demonstrates:

Executional excellence. The selected partner should be capable of translating ambitious concepts into polished, reliable event experiences.

Exceptional organization. State of Innovation Day involves numerous stakeholders, vendors, deadlines and interdependent workstreams.

Solutions-oriented thinking. When an execution challenge arises, the selected partner should bring Innovate Alabama thoughtful options and solutions.

Respect for creative ownership. The selected partner should be comfortable working with a client that maintains strong internal creative direction and should view its role as enabling and executing that vision.

Proactive leadership. The selected partner should anticipate production needs and challenges without relying on Innovate Alabama to manage the details of execution.

Strong collaboration. The selected firm will work closely with Innovate Alabama staff and other partners throughout the engagement.

Experience with high-visibility events. The partner should demonstrate the ability to successfully serve executives, public officials, corporate leaders, entrepreneurs and other VIP stakeholders.

Attention to detail. The quality of execution should reflect the significance and visibility of State of Innovation Day.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The following section should be reviewed and supplemented by Innovate Alabama's legal and/or procurement representatives prior to release.

Innovate Alabama reserves the right to:

1. Reject any or all proposals;
2. Waive minor irregularities or informalities in submitted proposals;
3. Request additional information or clarification from any respondent;
4. Modify the scope or schedule of this RFP;
5. Negotiate scope, pricing and contract terms with one or more respondents;
6. Discontinue the RFP process at any time; and
7. Select the proposal determined to provide the greatest overall value to Innovate Alabama.

This RFP does not constitute an offer or commitment by Innovate Alabama. Innovate Alabama may modify, suspend, cancel or terminate this RFP process, conduct discussions or negotiations with one or more respondents, request revised proposals, and select or decline to select any respondents, in each case at its sole discretion. All costs associated with preparing and submitting a proposal are the sole responsibility of the respondent. Submission of a proposal does not create any contractual rights or obligations between Innovate Alabama and the respondent. Any resulting engagement will be subject to the successful negotiation and execution of a written agreement between Innovate Alabama and the selected respondent. Additional terms regarding insurance, indemnification, confidentiality, intellectual property, conflicts of interest, compliance with applicable law, payment terms and other contractual requirements will be incorporated as appropriate.