MARKET RESEARCH SERVICES FOR CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO
Clarification and Verification of Specification Information
(Questions and Answers)
November 10, 2011

Q1. Can Certified M/WBEs be split by the primary consultant?
A1. No, each level of participation should be independent. A primary/prime can be either or on a contract but not both.

Q2. Quantitative research, more information is needed as to what CCC is looking for?
A2. CCC is looking to measure current perception of CCC and its seven (7) colleges among the general Chicago population, as well as among those considering attending college in the next 12-24 months. Are they aware of CC and its colleges? If so, are they considering CCC as an option? If not, why not? What might move them to do so? City Colleges also seek to know how we compare with other comparable educational options in the area, and wish to test existing messages. Do people not thinking of college get moved to think about it (with CCC as an option) when they hear what we offer?

Q3. Who do you want to target or who should be included? Do you want only City of Chicago tax payers or a broader population?
A3. See above

Q4. Are you interested in measuring awareness perception?
A4. Yes

Q5. Are you interested in testing quantitative?
A5. Bidders should propose what they would recommend.

Q6. What is the budget for these services?
A6. We are looking for bidders to provide us with their proposed budget.

Q7. Is CCC trying to reach neighboring cities and counties?
A7. Not as part of this effort.

Q8. Is there a timeline for this effort?
A8. Yes, by February 2012

Q9. Please clarify the requirements for MBE/WBE participation. Are we required to have two different subcontracting arrangements – one for a minimum of 25% of the contract value to an MBE and an additional agreement for a minimum of 7% of the contract value to a women business enterprise? Confirm that we would need to have subcontracting agreements in place at the time of proposal submission.
A9. That is correct with regard to the participation and subcontracting agreements need to be in place at the time of submission.
Q10. Pricing Structure and Hourly Rates; the RFP indicates that CCC will not pay nor reimburse any travel and hotel costs. Is this meant to include the moderator’s travel expenses associated with the focus groups?
A10. Yes. Pricing is to be fully inclusive of all services and expenses.

Q11. Please provide clarification around the specifications for the survey (Quantitative part) – do you have an anticipated sample size, questionnaire length, etc. What are the final deliverables for the survey?
A11. See above for deliverables. Looking vendor to determine sample size and length based on above information.

Q12. Clarification on the focus groups, locations, will you provide lists, deliverables, etc?
A12. No. Vendor should handle everything.

Q13. Clarification on the requirement for clients and portfolio (page 5) - a list of all clients for the past three years with scope of work, contract value and project manager.
A13. Respondents shall provide four (4) client samples of market research services as defined in this RFP. (Refer to Addendum No. 2)

Q14. It's our understanding that City Colleges envisions that the scope of work will include both qualitative and quantitative research tasks. Does City Colleges have a preference regarding the order in which the individual qualitative and quantitative tasks are to be conducted?
A14. Vendor should recommend sequencing.

Q15. The RFP stipulates that the qualitative research will consist of 12 focus groups. What is the number of quantitative interviews that City Colleges is envisioning?
A15. See above

Q16. Is it correct that City Colleges expects all data collection completed and all research results delivered by January 31, 2012?
A16. We would like everything in hand in February 2012.

Q17. What zip codes will define the geography to be included in the quantitative public opinion research?
A17. City of Chicago.

Q18. Will the research task(s) to be conducted among prospective students be limited to the same zip codes defining the geography for the quantitative public opinion research?
A18. Yes

Q19. Will the messages to be developed and tested be targeted exclusively to prospective students, or does City Colleges also plan to develop messages that will be targeted to the general population?
A19. Overwhelmingly student-driven but there may be some “taxpayer awareness” type messages.

Q20. Can CCC provide a list of firms receiving the RFP?
A20. Yes, see attachment

Q21. Can CCC provide a list of participants for the Pre-Proposal Conference meeting?
A21. Yes, see attachment.
Q22. Can CCC provide notes from the pre-proposal conference?
A22. This is the listing of questions are from the pre-proposal meeting and additional questions asked prior to the deadline for submitting questions.

Q23. Has CCC conducted any similar market research in the last 5 years? If so, which outside firms were used?
A23. N/A

Q24. Would space be available at CCC campuses or sites to hold focus groups? If so, is there a fee? Or should we include the cost of a professional focus group facility in our budget?
A25. Yes to the latter question.

Q26. Does CCC permit the provision of incentives/compensation for focus group participants? Is there a limit?
A26. That should be included in your price proposal.

Q27. Would CCC be able to provide lists of “prospective students” or is the vendor expected to obtain such lists elsewhere?
A27. A prospective student is anyone likely to attend college in the next 12-24 months. There is no list.

Q28. If lists of prospective students will be provided by CCC, what type of contact information would be included? Name, telephone, physical address, email, and/or other?
A28. See above

Q29. If the vendor is expected to identify prospective students and contact information, is the market area limited to/defined exclusively as the City of Chicago? If not, can CCC provide a defined market area of counties or districts?
A29. City of Chicago

Q30. Would CCC assist in gaining access to current high school students through local school districts/schools?
A30. We have relationships with schools that could be leveraged but we expect vendors to provide turn-key services as much as possible.

Q31. Can CCC provide demographic information for the market area (defining the statistical universe) or is this the responsibility of the consultant to research as part of the contract?
A31. See above

Q32. Is there any preference for local or IL-based vendors versus out of area/out-of-state?
A32. Looking for best vendors with appropriate price proposal

Q33. Will all of the potential “services requested” be either surveys or focus groups of a similar nature in order to provide an accurate price estimate? Or will the scope of potential work differ significantly?
A33. We need a poll and the focus groups as described. That’s the scope.
Q34. Are any specific confidence levels/error rate thresholds expected for quantitative research components?
A34. Looking for vendor/bidders’ guidance.

Q35. As listed in the Scope of Work, there is a two-year age gap between recent high school graduates and adults. Were 23 and 24 year olds intentionally excluded from both analysis groups, or should these be included in all “adults” segments?
A35. That was an error. They can be included in either of the focus group segments, ages 23-45. (Refer to Addendum No. 3)

Q36. On page 4 the RFP states, “One (1) original and ten (10) CD copies are to be submitted in response to this RFP, see Page 1.” Does this mean the proposer must submit one original paper proposal (hard copy) and 10 CD copies (electronic copies)?
A36. One (1) original signature paper submission and ten (10) Electronic CDs in pdf Word format.

Q37. Release of tax returns. This is something that our firm does not typically release. Is there anything in particular you are looking for in the returns that we might be able to provide to satisfy your requirements? Ours is a privately held partnership and we prefer to keep our financial statements confidential.
A37. CCC will accept as substitute for Financial Statements, three (3) years of Profit/Loss Income statements and a balance sheet. (Refer to Addendum No. 3)

Q38. Clients and portfolio, Can you please expand what you are looking for here? The specifics of our contracts are often confidential agreements between the firm and our clientele. Disclosing the work we've done or including the contract value for our work may violate agreements we have with these clients.
A38. Respondents shall provide four (4) client samples of market research services as defined in this RFP. (Refer to Addendum No. 2)

Q39. Also, how is this section different from the experience/references sections?
A39. References are direct feedback from any of your clients attesting to the quality of your performance and experience in providing these services. Three references are required. (Refer to Addendum No. 2)

Q40. Payment schedule, I’m not sure I’m clear on what your timeline for payment is. Are you looking to make full payment on all research at the end of the year or is payment based on the completion of each component (quantitative survey, round of focus groups)? We typically require payment at the time research is conducted, but would be happy to work with your team on a mutually beneficial payment schedule.
A40. The payment structure can be arranged in a per component basis -- quantitative survey, research, focus groups etc. However, before payment can be processed, CCC will need to approve the quality and confirm the completion of each component deliverable.

Q41. References. At one point, you ask for three (5) references. Are you looking for three references or five?
A41. Three (3) references are required. (Refer to Addendum No. 2)