**COUNTY OF ALAMEDA**

**HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY (HCSA)**

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**to  
RFP No. HCSA-900322V2**

**for**

**Brand Re-Design Services to Improve Health Emergency Response and Service Delivery**

**Summary of Q&A Received by February 14, 2022**

**Notice to Bidders**

This County of Alameda, HCSA Questions & Answers (Q&A) Document has been electronically issued to potential bidders via e-mail based on the bidders conference sign-in sheets or from other sources. This Q&A Document will also be posted on the General Services Agency (GSA) Contracting Opportunities website located at <https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/>

**Bid Process/Submission Questions**

**Q1: Can we submit the proposals via email?**

*A1: No; please refer to Section IV.S of the RFP, SUBMITTAL OF BIDS and Section IV.T of the RFP, RESPONSE FORMAT, for instructions regarding bid submission.*

**Q2: If it is not too late, we would like to participate in the RFP process.  We have obviously missed the two bidders conferences, but if we can get copies of the Questions & Answers, we should be able to get up to speed. Please let me know if you’re still open to receiving a bid from our organization.**

*A2: Attendance at one of the bidders’ conferences is not mandatory for an organization to be eligible to submit a bid response for this RFP.*

*This Q&A Document, the RFP, and other related documents are posted on the GSA Contracting Opportunities website’s posting for RFP No. HCSA-900322V2, located at:* [*https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/*](https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/)

**Q3a: Would it be possible to conduct an additional bidder's conference for those of us who were unable to attend the ones on 2/10 & 2/14.**

*A3a: No; there will be no additional bidders’ conferences conducted for this procurement.*

**Q3b: If not, were the 2/10 & 2/14 meetings recorded and could we have access to these recordings?**

*A3b: No; the 2/10 & 2/14 bidders’ conferences were not recorded; all content presented at the bidders’ conferences was directly from the RFP document. All bidders should carefully review the RFP documents located at:* [*https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/*](https://gsa.acgov.org/do-business-with-us/contracting-opportunities/)

**Q4: Will being located in Alameda County play a factor in selection criteria?**

*A4: No. Being located in Alameda County is not one of the scoring criteria for this procurement. Please also refer to Answer No. A14 below.*

**Q5: Does the County have a preference for in-state bidders?**

*A5: No. Please also refer to Answer No. A4 above, and Answer A6 and Answer A14 below.*

**Q6: Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this?  (like, from India or Canada)**

*A6: There is no prohibition of companies from outside of the USA from submitting a bid response.*

*To be eligible to submit bid responses for this RFP, businesses must be certified to transact business in the State of California with the California Secretary of State (please refer to RFP, Section II.S, Submittal of Bids) and must meet the RFP’s requirements (including but not limited to those requirements described in Exhibit D, Exhibit E, and Exhibit E-1 of the RFP).*

*Contract awards under this RFP will be subject to applicable requirements of the funding source, including without limitation the requirements under Exhibit E, including without limitation Section R, Domestic Preferences for Procurements.*

*Please also refer to Answer No. A4 above and Answer A14 below.*

**Q7: Has an incumbent agency been invited to participate in the review?**

*A7: No.*

**Q8: Can you share the names and titles of any additional decision makers not disclosed to date who will be involved in the review process?**

*A8: No. Please refer to Section II.H of the RFP, EVALUATION CRITERIA / SELECTION COMMITTEE, for information about the evaluation process. Other than the initial pass/fail Evaluation Criteria, the evaluation of the proposals shall be within the sole judgment and discretion of the County Selection Committee (CSC).*

*All contact during the evaluation phase shall be through the Health Care Services Agency’s Special Projects Office only. Bidders shall neither contact nor lobby evaluators during the evaluation process. Attempts by Bidder to contact and/or influence members of the CSC may result in disqualification of Bidder.*

*The evaluation process may include a two-stage approach including an initial evaluation of the written proposals and preliminary scoring to develop a short list of bidders that will continue to the final stage of oral interview and reference checks. The preliminary scoring will be based on the total points, excluding points allocated to references and oral interview.*

*If the two-stage approach is used, the three bidders receiving the highest preliminary scores and with at least 200 points will be invited to an oral interview. Only the bidders meeting the short list criteria will proceed to the next stage. All other bidders will be deemed eliminated from the process.*

**Q9: Will we have access to the decision makers for questions prior to RFP submission or presentation?**

*A9: No. Please refer to Answer No. A8 above.*

**Q10: How many agencies have you invited to participate and how many to you expect to shortlist?**

*A10: The County performed outreach to several thousand organizations that are subscribed to Alameda County General Services Agency’s contracting opportunities mailing list as well as to several hundred organizations identified by NAICS codes listed in the RFP. The County utilized the Alameda County Auditor-Controller Agency’s Small, Local, and Emerging Business Supplier database as the source for its NAICS-based outreach.*

*The County cannot predict how many proposals will be shortlisted or if the short-list approach will be utilized. Please refer to Section II.H of the RFP, EVALUATION CRITERIA / SELECTION COMMITTEE, for additional information. Please also refer to Answer No. A8 above.*

**Q11: Does the County have specific requirements for which staff should be designated as key personnel?**

*A11: Please refer to RFP Section I.D, BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS, and to Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, Required Documentation and Submittals, Item 7, Key Personnel, of the RFP document.*

**Q12: In your RFP format, there's not much space to include the case studies we plan to submit. Can we share these case studies as an addendum?**

*A12: Please refer to Exhibit A – Bid Response Packet, Required Documentation and Submittals for specific page limits per written section of the Bid Response Packet.*

**Scope of Work Questions**

**Q13: Who conducted the agency-wide communications audit?**

*A13: The Agency-wide communications audit was completed by the HCSA Communications Director.*

**Q14: Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)***A14: Please see Answer No. A6. Bidders should be aware that certain activities under the Scope of Work may require travel to and/or activities or services to be conducted in Alameda County, such as in person meetings, convenings, and/or presentations.*

**Q15: Whether we need to come over there for meetings?**

*A15: As noted in A14 above,* *bidders should be aware that certain activities under the Scope of Work may require travel to and/or activities or services to be conducted in Alameda County, such as in person meetings, convenings, and/or presentations.*

**Q16: Approximately how many stakeholder contacts will the project manager work with on a weekly basis?**

*A16: The number of stakeholder contacts will vary based upon interest, the phase of the project, and Agency needs.*

**Q17: Can the County please clarify the intended timing of the website build?**

*A17: The County intends to begin the website building portion in the 2nd quarter of FY 2022-23 (October-December 2022).*

**Q18: Can the County please clarify if the selected vendor will be responsible for website mockups in addition to web design strategy?**

*A18: A website architecture (layout, user interface, site map) will be required as part of the RFP scope.*

**Q19: How many logos, for how many HCSA brands, do you envision will need to be created by the winning agency? (We're assuming 9-10 based on lists of HSCA departments/divisions/programs)**

*A19: The number of logos will be determined as part of the environmental scan and stakeholder engagement processes.*

**Q20: Once the project is awarded and underway, how many HSCA contacts/decision makers/stakeholders will be involved as part of the process with approval of new branding, logos, etc.?**

*A20: Contacts, decision makers and stakeholders are three separate groups with some overlap. The number will be vary based on the project evolution.*

**Q21: Our assumptions are that initial bids are for branding materials in English and that translation would be a phase 2 scope of work, correct? -- If this is incorrect, which threshold languages would we need to include for Alameda County?**

*A21: Threshold languages may include Spanish, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Punjabi.*

**Q22: Do you envision that the nature of initial reputation research and interviews with internal and external stakeholders will primarily be either group discussions or 1-on-1 meetings?**

*A22: Bidders should propose a strategy that will efficiently and effectively gather the most information to make informed decisions to meet the project aims.*

**Q23: Are your expectations for this contract that an extensive survey for Alameda County community members will be covered as part of this engagement? (which will affect the overall budget availability for other items)**

*A23: Bidders should propose a community engagement strategy that meets the aims of the project.*

**Q24: What level of beta testing is required for the brand and website? Are there any specific scientific evaluation requirements or can the feedback be informal?**

*A24: Bidders should propose a methodology for brand and website testing that supports the Agency’s needs as stated in the RFP.*

**Q25: Can you elaborate on the environmental scans needed?**

*A25: Bidders should propose an environmental scan based on the Agency’s needs as stated in the RFP.*

**Budget Questions**

**Q26: Does HCSA have other outside funds, contractors or resources for use with market research?**

*A26: No.*

**Q27: Will costs of research also be included in the $300,000 budget if this is a fixed number, or could this be billed as an out-of-pocket expense in addition?**

*A27: $300,000 is the maximum budget and not to exceed award amount for the initial contract that results from this RFP.*

**Q28: Is the $300,000 maximum budget as notated on Page 1 of Exhibit B the total budget for this project as outlined, or is it only for one specific item or is the budget flexible as determined most appropriate by the bidding agencies?**

*A28: Please see Answer No. A27 above.*

**Q29: Why are salaries required in the budget? Can these be provided post-award?**

*A29: The County is requesting that Bidders propose a budget that addresses salary expenses as well as all project costs. The bidder’s Cost and Budget will be evaluated by the County Selection Committee as outlined in Section II.H of the RFP, EVALUATION CRITERIA / SELECTION COMMITTEE, for information about the evaluation process.*