



NEW JERSEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS / PROPOSALS (RFQ/P)

2010-RFQ/P-032 – SALES SUPPORT & COMMUNICATION TOOLS CONSULTING SERVICES

Questions / Answers #3

May 25, 2010

The following question was raised with regard to the subject solicitation:

1. **QUESTION: “Is the proposed budget of \$400,000 consistent with what was spent by the NJEDA last year?”**

ANSWER: No. In accordance with Governor Christie’s direction to all State departments, agencies and authorities to focus on cost reductions and efficiencies, the Authority has reduced its budgetary monies in this area.

2. **QUESTION: “If this proposed budget is significantly lower or higher than budgets in the past year or two, what is the rationale for that change?”**

ANSWER: See the response to Question #1.

3. **QUESTION: “How has the budget been allocated in the past? (For example, what percent has been spent on media buys, printing, etc.)? The goal is to try and best understand how the NJEDA has utilized its’ spend in this area in the past so that the best perspective on budgeting for 2011 can be provided.”**

ANSWER: As expressed during the Pre-Bid Conference, the Authority has significantly reduced its budget monies available to procure these services. As such, previous budget allocation information will not be meaningful to this procurement and resulting contract.

Additionally, as the Authority’s focus has shifted more to online methods, both for dissemination of information and communication about our products and services, prior year expenditures are not an accurate reflection of the Authority’s expectations on a “go forward” basis. It is recommended to all interested Proposers to consider their expertise in the business-to-business space and coupled with the annual dollar value of this contract, should make appropriate recommendations that would result in the best use of available funds.

4. **QUESTION:** “Is there a baseline percentage that the state views as fair and equitable when it comes to agency compensation? For instance, some companies use a percentage of their total marketing budgets to compensate agencies for various services. The goal is to best understand the NJEDA’s mindset when it comes to assessing competitive pricing for agency fees.”

ANSWER: As indicated in the section “*Fee Schedule*”:

“Proposers shall provide a fully completed and signed “Fee Schedule” (attached to this RFQ/P as Exhibit R – Sections 1 – 5), included in its proposal submission. Proposers should be aware that the Authority desires to contract with a successful Proposer whose “Core Services Fee” and its “Media Placement Mark-Up Percentage”, allows the Authority to maximize its communication dollars on actual, tangible advertising products and services (i.e. television spots, printed collateral materials, internet advertisements, etc.)....”

When evaluating proposals, as indicated on the section “*Evaluation Criteria / Selection Process*” the Authority will evaluate proposals, in accordance with the pre-established criteria indicated in this section of the RFQ/P. *Item # 9* specifically addresses the evaluation of “Price” as follows:

“The Proposer’s Price, as exemplified by the prices submitted for its:

- a. “Core Services Fee”
- b. “Media Placement Mark-Up Percentage”
- c. *Blended Hourly Rates* (this is the Proposer’s hourly rates which are totaled and then averaged to obtain a “blended hourly rate”)
- d. *Allocation of the Costs for Core Services and Core Production and Media Services*, as evidenced by the Proposer’s *Proposed Budget* submission
- e. “New Brand Development Fee”

In accordance with fair bidding practices, the Authority cannot indicate a “preferred” percentage to be assessed.

5. **QUESTION:** “Does the state have data they can share on NJEDA web traffic and overall usage (number one download, etc?) Have success metrics been established for the website for 2010?”

ANSWER: The Authority tracks a number of different metrics with regards to our website, and adjust content and methods of communication based on those metrics.

6. **QUESTION:** “Can we get a copy of the EDA’s 2009 and 2010 media plans?”

ANSWER: The Authority’s 2009 Media Plan is not relevant to the services required in 2010 of the resulting contract.

The 2010 Plan as originally conceptualized and developed is obsolete as a result of reductions made to available budget monies to procure these Sales Support and Communication Tools Services.

Proposers are cautioned to note that the 2009 / 2010 Plans are not representative of

the monies available and the anticipated media placements and purchases that will be made against the resulting contract. The 2009 overall marketing Plan, of which media was a part, was based on an estimated annual budget of \$1.2 million dollars, which has been adjusted to an estimated \$400,000 for the 2010 calendar year.

7. **QUESTION:** “On page 2, second paragraph, it states that “a core part of the first year of the contract will be to design and implement a new sub-brand for the NJEDA.” On page 3, second paragraph (and other places throughout), the RFP states “The Authority is seeking to secure an advertising agency/firm to assist in communicating the Authority’s message using the Authority brand”. Can you clarify whether the NJEDA is seeking a new sub-brand in year 1 or will the NJEDA continue to use the state’s brand?”

ANSWER: At this juncture, the Authority will continue to use the State brand; however, as stated at the Pre-Bid Conference, at some point in the future, the Authority may be advised by the State that it intends to change its brand. Should this occur; the Authority would also change its branding. The successful Firm must have the capabilities to design and implement a new branding campaign, should the Authority determine its need to do so.

8. **QUESTION:** “On page 3, third paragraph, there is a reference to existing research on which relevant messages will be developed. When will the research be made available? Then on page 8, #6, indicates that the proposer will be coordinating the NJEDA’s existing 2008-2009 research data. Does that mean that the research is complete but that the proposer will be asked to analyze the existing research and propose additional topics for new research?”

ANSWER: The Authority performed customer surveys in both 2008 and 2009. The resulting information will be shared with the successful Firm and together, the Authority and the Firm will determine potential areas of focus, based on areas of development as noted on the survey results.

9. **QUESTION:** “On page 8, #9, the scope of work includes “develop, subcontract, manage and execute any required research programs.” Please confirm that the cost of said research is outside of the \$400,000 budget.”

ANSWER: Yes.

10. **QUESTION:** “Who will be participating in the evaluation committee?”

ANSWER: The Evaluation Committee will be comprised of Authority staff members which may include senior and / or middle managers, as well as staff positions.

11. **QUESTION: “How many individual brochures did NJEDA produce in the past year?”**

ANSWER: More than 10,000 although this is not relevant to the “go forward” plan. It is the Authority’s position that as more communication is driven through online means, brochure production will become less critical and less frequent.

12. **QUESTION: “What was the value of the total media buy for the past year?”**

ANSWER: In excess of \$400,000. Interested firms are reminded that the historical media buy over the last year is not an accurate measure of the “go forward” plan for the services required of the resulting contract.

13. **QUESTION: “Does NJEDA have any research demonstrating which media and other marketing initiatives have historically produced the best results?”**

ANSWER: The Authority used business-to-business media initiatives to build awareness of its products and programs, the effectiveness of which was measured in the 2009 survey. Results on other marketing initiatives varied. There wasn’t any one particular initiative that produced the “best results” across the board.

14. **QUESTION: “How many e-mail addresses are on the NJEDA’s database? Is the NJEDA presently engaged in an e-communication program?”**

ANSWER: The Authority actively utilizes e-blasts as a method of communication to customers, prospects and intermediaries, drawing from a combination of its own database, as well as augmenting with purchased lists for certain market segments. The Authority presently has over 4,000 names in its e-database.

15. **QUESTION: “At the Pre-Bid Conference, NJEDA indicated that the vendor may be called upon to perform Public Relations, Research and/or Branding services. Please confirm that the costs associated with these services will fall outside of the \$400,000 annual budget.”**

ANSWER: Yes.

16. **QUESTION: “Please describe what measurement criteria NJEDA has used to evaluate past programs.”**

ANSWER: The Authority considers application volume in its various financing programs, and the variance year over year and then correlates that data to marketing initiatives used specifically for those financing programs.

17. **QUESTION:** “NJEDA indicated that it has printing vendors in place and that we should base our printing estimates on 1,000 quantify per collateral. On page 9, #10, it indicates that the Authority may bid the printing work directly or assign that task to the Consultant firm. Please clarify – is the cost of said printing included in the \$400,000 budget regardless of whether it is bid by the NJEDA or the Consultant?”

ANSWER: Printing costs are included in the \$400,000. The printing contract in place is for specific types of collateral only, and therefore, if there is a variation to the type of collateral (either dimensions or style), the printing for that piece would need to be triple bid by the agency. That said, much of what we have produced is in pdf format on the website and therefore we have minimized the need for significant print on a go forward basis.

18. **QUESTION:** “What is the projected start date for the media buy?”

ANSWER: Any media buying would be contemplated for calendar year 2011. The Authority has cancelled the balance of its media buying for the remainder of 2010.

19. **QUESTION:** “Are there specific brand colors as part of brand standards? Is the creative limited to featuring the brand colors?”

ANSWER: When preparing its creative submission responses to this RFQ/p, interested firms must use the colors provided on the CD, distributed at the Pre-Bid Conference. Firms may use any or all of these colors, as provided.

Additionally, in the interest of controlling the Proposer’s out of pocket costs to prepare and submit the three (3) creative presentations required of the section “Mandatory Requirements of the Proposer - Development Approach Demonstrating Capabilities”, it is not necessary to generate actual “copy” in the presentation materials; “greek” is completely acceptable.