

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
MARKETING, CREATIVE, AND MEDIA SERVICES
August 10, 2022

1. **Question:** Do these need to be submitted as two separate sections or can the case studies/work examples included in 4.2.3.2 include the outcomes within the cases?

4.2.3.2 Project Examples

4.2.3.3 Project Outcomes

Answer: Bidders may submit project examples and project outcomes together rather than breaking them out into two separate sections.

2. **Question:** Our agency is specific to Media strategy, buying in planning for both traditional and digital media (social inclusive in digital), in addition we implement event sponsorship strategies. This RFP does not segment these services independently, rather they are aggregated in the full-service LEVEL 3 option that also includes design and production services. Should I assume that our firm should NOT submit since we do not conform to any of the 3 levels being requested?

Answer: The Marketing, Creative Services and Media Master Contracts do not encompass every possible service area and service combinations. In this RFP, media buying is coupled with creative services, so this RFP may not be appropriate for the specific expertise of any particular firm. However, a state agency can contract with a prequalified marketing firm at any time for media planning and buying outside of the Marketing, Creative Services and Media Master Contracts.

3. **Question:** In our Prequalification Application, we checked Media Planning/Buying, and provided examples of work for this, was there a reason that we did not get approved for this? It was the only category that we applied for that was not on our acceptance letter.

Answer: Service category approvals are given after the review of supporting evidence for accompanying work samples. To be considered for the Media Planning / Buying service category, vendors must include sample media insertion plans to illustrate an overall media campaign strategy and media plan utilizing the most advantageous channels for each audience or objective. This includes, but is not limited to:

- establishing timelines and flight schedules
- negotiating efficient buys and cost effective rates
- developing value added opportunities with the media
- trafficking the placement and delivery of creative to media outlets
- monitoring campaigns to ensure insertion orders are properly executed

- reconciling media invoices
- providing a post-campaign summary report of the maximum reach and frequency achieved to determine if goals and objectives were met

4. **Question:** We would like to add, Video Production, and Campaign Strategy/Planning (as well as Media Planning/Buying) to our list, so that we can apply for the Level 3 Full-Service Marketing for this RFP: Marketing, Creative, and Media Services. Please advise how we should apply/add those to our prequalifications.

Answer: A vendor may submit a request to revise their prequalification status at any time to add or remove a service category. A revision application must include an updated Signature Page, Application Questionnaire, and the minimum two (2) project/work samples for each new service category that detail experience and ability to perform work (e.g. additional expertise added to staff).

Prior to submitting an eligible proposal, all bidders on this project must either submit an application to become prequalified or currently be prequalified. To become prequalified, bidders must submit an application to the Chief Marketing Office at least three business days prior to the RFP closing date. The prequalification application needs to be approved before a selected bidder can secure a Marketing Master Contract, but an application for either initial Prequalification or a revised application to add service categories can be in process during the bid review period, as long as the applications are received at least three business days prior to the RFP closing date.

The Chief Marketing Office is in the process of updating the prequalification categories to align with the levels listed in this RFP. To be considered for Campaign Strategy/Planning, a vendor needs to be prequalified in “Marketing Strategy/Planning.”

A request for revision, like initial prequalification, is separate and distinct from the bidding process and will neither affect nor stay the bidding process for any advertised contract(s).

5. **Question:** My agency was registered for a number of years as an approved vendor, but recently fell off due to a paperwork issue on my end. Can I/should I reapply for the general registry while applying for a Master Contract? Or does this Request for Proposals supersede the original registry?

Answer: The Prequalification Application process is separate from the Marketing, Creative, and Media Services Request for Proposal. However, bidders may use the same project examples in both the RFP response and prequalification application. If a bidder’s prequalification status has lapsed, the bidder will need to reapply. Applications for initial, renewal or revision of

prequalification status must be submitted to the Chief Marketing Office a minimum of three business days prior to the RFP closing date.

6. **Question:** Why is this RFP being issued at this time?

Answer: The current Marketing and Creative Services Master Contracts will expire on October 31, 2022. This RFP is being issued to select firm(s) for the contract period of November 1, 2022 through October 31, 2024, with possible extensions through October 31, 2026.

7. **Question:** Do Vermont-based companies receive a preference?

Answer: Bidders located within and beyond Vermont are welcome to respond to the RFP. Successful bidders must show an understanding of the marketing and creative needs of the State of Vermont as stated in the evaluation criteria listed in section 3.4.1 of the RFP.

8. **Question:** It would seem the background requirement of "Understanding of marketing and creative needs of the State of Vermont" might favor an existing business relationship of a Vermont-based company. Is there an existing agency in this role and are they participating in this RFP?

Answer: The phrase "Understanding of marketing and creative needs of the State of Vermont" simply means proposals will be evaluated based upon the bidder's ability to understand Vermont audiences, employ effective marketing and outreach tactics in Vermont, and a firm grasp on behavior-change marketing.

Bidders are encouraged to submit proposals regardless of whether they have worked for the State of Vermont before. Selected bidders will receive onboarding to familiarize them with the State of Vermont's marketing and communication needs.

A number of marketing firms have provided marketing services through the Marketing and Creative Services Master Contracts over the years. A list of current Marketing Master Contractors can be found on the Chief Marketing Office's [website](#).

9. **Question:** Is there an approximate annual budget associated with the projects to be performed?

Answer: This RFP is not being issued for any one specific state agency, department, sector or campaign. Budgets for marketing and communications activities are determined annually with funds appropriated by the Vermont General Assembly and in some cases by the federal government and, therefore,

may vary substantially from year to year, and from entity to entity. Individual projects for a state entity can range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 or more.

10. **Question:** Can you characterize the budget of a typical project?

Answer: See Question #9.

11. **Question:** Approximately how many projects are assigned to the agency historically?

Answer:

See Question #9. This RFP is not being issued for any one specific state agency, department, sector or campaign. Becoming a Marketing Master Contractor does not guarantee any level of business from the State of Vermont. The process that state entities will follow in selecting a Master Contractor for any specific project or campaign is explained on the Chief Marketing Office [website](#).

12. **Question:** Are there any minority, women-owned, disadvantaged, or veteran-owned business requirements for subcontracting, or considered a preference for selection?

Answer: The State of Vermont recognizes the important contributions and vital impact which small businesses have on the state's economy. In this regard, the state prescribes to a free and open bidding process that affords all businesses equal access and opportunity to compete for state contracts for goods and services. The state also recognizes the existence of businesses owned by minorities and women and directs all state agencies and departments to make a good faith effort to encourage these firms to compete for state contracts.

13. **Question:** In 4.2.3, if we are responding for Level 3, Full-Service, do you want only 3 full-service samples, or could we include additional samples that fit Level 2 and did not require multi-channel integrated campaign planning and media strategy and implementation? Simply, if we have Level 2 Samples that demonstrate our creative capabilities well in addition to our Level 3 samples can we include them beyond the 3 required.

Answer: The RFP asks for at least three project examples. Bidders are welcome to submit additional project examples that best speak to their ability to perform the corresponding service level.