

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROJECT NO. RFP 18-01

STRATEGIC PLANNING

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS NO. 1

Date: October 9, 2017

To: Prospective Respondents

From: Procurement Operations Department, Houston Community College

Subject: Questions and Answers Responses

1. We are unclear of what we're asked to quote and we want to give the fairest and accurate rate possible.

Response: Proposers are required to provide a response to the requirements noted in Section 1 and accordingly provide a Price Proposal as noted in Section 2. The price shall be for all aspects in the scope which include assisting in developing a long-term horizon strategic plan featuring rolling multi-year short-term horizon plans with objectives and policies to guide college development and direction beyond the end of the current strategic plan (as further defined in the RFP).

The price proposal shall include the complete cost to deliver the work as specified and include all referenced detailed price breakdown noted in Section 2.

2. Is there an incumbent vendor/consultant that HCC has worked with in the past for this initiative? Will HCC be seeking a bid from them?

Response: The scope as such, is a new concept, although HCC has used other consultants to help with various aspects of the strategic plan in the past.

The RFP process is an open and competitive process that any vendor who chooses to respond can do so.

3. What would you do differently this round for the strategic planning?

Response: Many aspects of the scope are being addressed differently and being improved upon, one example would be to have more opportunity for industry and economic development council participation.

4. To what extent are the dates corresponding to the phases on page 4 of the RFP flexible?

Response: The proposed dates are firm and aligned with the needs of the organization. It is anticipated that work will begin in January 2018 and be completed by May 2019 as noted.

5. Does HCCS want the consultant to visit each college within the System or should meetings be planned at a central location with college participants traveling to that location?

Response: Stakeholder input and feedback mechanisms are integral parts of the planning processes. Please refer to the Scope as detailed and note that all divisions of the system should participate.

The consultant may advise as to forum locations and relative activities.

6. When was the last Program Vitality Study complete and how does that integrate with the Strategic Plan?

Response: The last report was compiled in the Spring of 2016. The report is used to ensure competitive performance of the programs and program compliance with the THECB accountability measures in furtherance of the key objectives of the current strategic plan.

7. What is the expectation for primary research to better understand the Houston marketplace?

Response: Business and industry forecasts as well as demographic changes are considerations that should yield the predictive analytics we require for long term horizon scenario planning.

8. You refer to utilization of integrated data analytics & emerging patterns in behaviors of students? Is this data collected routinely by HCC? If so, is it available to the selected consultants? If not, is there an expectation that the consultant will gather and analyze this information?

Response: The current data collection and production methods will be available for consultant use. Additional production requests are anticipated.

9. Is HCC looking for change leadership and coaching services to ensure implementation and updating of the strategic plan over the life of the plan?

Response: We are not looking for change leadership. We have great leadership in place. Mechanisms for assessing the plan are essential.

10. What consulting firm led your last strategic planning process? Are they being considered for this proposal?

Response: Prior work included the efforts of Deutser who provided assistance in revisiting the vision, values, and behavioral competencies aspired by the institution.

The RFP process is an open and competitive process that any vendor who chooses to respond can do so.

11. Was HCC required to seek S/M/W BE bids as a part of this procurement process?

Response: As noted in the RFP, HCC has a small business participation goal of 5% worth 5 points. HCC is seeking to expand their Small Business participation and proposers are encouraged to seek out and propose the inclusion of their selected certified small business firm to perform under the resulting contract.

As noted in Section 3 – Proposal Evaluation, proposers are only eligible for the 5 available points for SBE Subcontracting provided they commit to 5% SBE subcontracting as noted in the solicitation as amended.

12. What are the specific requirements for S/M/W BE at HCC?

Response: The Small Business Program requirement can be found in Section 4-Tab 6 (page 13) and Section 5.14 (page 17-18) as amended.

13. What % of HCC contracts awarded actually goes to S/M/W BE?

Response: Small business participation occurs at many levels throughout the contracting process; for example, under the construction and related services category HCC has realized 36% small business participation. In the category of goods and services HCC is trending approximately 16% direct contracting with certified small businesses.

14. For attachment 2, if we plan to partner/subcontract with a small business (5%), we select "Yes, I will be subcontracting portion(s) of the contract." And the instructions say to then complete Attachments No. 3 which is a SMALL BUSINESS UNAVAILABILITY CERTIFICATE. These instructions seem to be contradictory. Please explain why if we plan to subcontract to a small business do we need to fill out an unavailability certificate?

Response: Correct, if you are subcontracting, you will select "yes" on Attachment 2; in addition, you will complete section 2, 3 and 4 of the noted attachment. Note – you will only be eligible for the available 5 points if you partner with an HCC recognized certified small business as noted RFP Section 5.14 (page 17-18) as amended in.

Attachment 3 is intended to allow the prime contractor the opportunity to demonstrate all the firms that you contacted in your efforts to subcontract a given portion of the work and document the noted fields including who may have not been available or selected. The goal of this form is to promote an open process in the identification and selection of certified small businesses and allow you to document same.

15. Attachment 7, section 4, states: Vendor shall identify whether vendor (or its principal), or its subcontractor(s), has current contracts (including leases) with other government agencies of the State of Texas. Should we list other contracts we have with public colleges in Texas or is that not considered a government agency?

Response: Yes, please list all business as noted in the requirement.

16. As your process included hiring an outside consultant, then, working through the project, as a team with the mentioned resources, is that also the vision this time?

Response: Yes, the consultant would be a member of the work team.

17. HCCS has already shown proven results through the current strategic plan, you mentioned some components that indicate you might consider "competitive-edge" factors as you continue to grow and expand with all your stakeholders in mind. Please define some key factors with that in mind?

Response: Development of the (workforce programs) Centers of Excellence is a priority.

18. You now serve a global initial employment and career progression group of students, how critical is the continued globalization to HCCS?

Response: This is very important as HCC leads the nation in the enrollment of international students.

19. Stakeholders are all key; is there a ranking or priorities among them you foresee this strategic plan must consider, beyond the College leadership?

Response: The integration of key external stakeholders (business and industry leaders, ISDs, civic leaders, and Higher Ed institution partners), faculty and student leaders will be part of a superior effort.

20. Do you plan to have another Advisory panel during this process as you defined from the, currently working strategic plan?

Response: A collaborative team of key external stakeholders is a best practice in planning.

21. Could we identify student interns from any program within the HCCS offerings? There are some programs that students can play a key role from the start, I believe, and could be benefited from the experience, if we can involve them from the beginning.

Response: Yes, the use of student interns is very important to HCC. As noted in Section 4.4.j – Tab 8 (page 13-14), the Business Relationship Strength requirement is the appropriate place to include a detailed description of how you propose to use student interns.

Proposers are encouraged to provide the details in their response and HCC will coordinate with the awarded vendor to complete the process of identifying and connecting with the best qualified students for the proposed engagement.

22. Your current Strategic Plan has buy-in from the work you all did involving all the stakeholders; can we have more of a description of how that effort came about? Do you foresee using the same process with more appropriate outside SMEs, Advisors, etc... toward your next metrics?

Response: The short answer is that the process involved reinforcing feedback loops orbiting around and information exchanged between the external (1) and internal work teams (4). The members of the Chancellor's cabinet operated as facilitators for the work teams (along with the presence of a consultant, periodically).

23. Will you require a demographic update included in this planning process as well, is that part of the consultant's role or will you duplicate the source used before, a very solid authority in this area?

Response: The ideal would be for the consultant to collaborate with information sources.

24. What is the budget for the prior phase plan; and do you consider this phase to be similar in scope?

Response: Prior work was compiled through various sources including internal resources; hence a value is not available. The current scope including all requirements is clearly noted in the RFP Section 2 as amended.

25. We are interested in working with students to do some of the on the ground data collection and possibly data organization for us; who and how can we coordinate this with?

Response: As noted in Section 4.4.j – Tab 8 (page 13-14), the Business Relationship Strength requirement is the appropriate place to include a detailed description of how you propose to use student interns.

Proposers are encouraged to provide the details in their response and HCC will coordinate with the awarded vendor to complete the process of identifying and connecting with the best qualified students for the proposed engagement.

26. Are you encouraging virtual interaction with respect to data collection to minimize disruption?

Response: The mechanisms for interaction would be in the purview of the consultant with input from the senior administration and the Board of Trustees.