



Request for Proposal

*Conference on College Composition and
Communication (CCCC) Writing/Doctoral Graduate
Programs Aggregation Web System*

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Issued By:

Conference on College Composition and Communication
(CCCC)

CCCC Representative:

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Introduction and Background

As writing programs and writing majors continue to proliferate, the need to provide quick and comprehensive data for prospective majors and graduate students has never been greater. Given the web's increased capability of delivering such information, the time is right for the development of a service to provide accurate and current doctoral program data to the field. To this end, in March 2014 the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) within NCTE chaired by Howard Tinberg contacted Jim Ridolfo and Malea Powell and asked them to lead a task force to provide recommendations to NCTE/CCCC about how best to collect data on graduate programs in rhetoric & writing and how best to make that data available to prospective students as well as to researchers. Ridolfo and Powell then reached out to scholars at a variety of rank and institutions who have been working on scholarly issues related to doctoral programs and the job market.

A CCCC task force on Developing a Database of Writing/Doctoral Programs was created. This committee was charged with:

Charge 1: Collect data that includes not only placement information of graduates in writing programs but also distinguishing characteristics of such programs, such as course lists, faculty specialties, emphasis of departments, acceptance rates, internship possibilities, faculty-student ratios, and so on

Charge 2: Propose a web-based means of maintaining and distributing such information

This task force is in need of such a web-based system and is accepting proposals in response to this Request for Proposal (also herein referred to as "RFP") in order to find a qualified source to provide developmental and post-launch support services.

The objective of this Request for Proposal is to locate a source that will provide the best overall value. While price is a significant factor, other criteria will form the basis of our award decision.

Submission Guidelines & Requirements

The following submission guidelines and requirements apply to this RFP:

1. Only qualified individuals or firms with prior experience on LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP/Python/Perl) stack development projects should submit proposals

in response to this request.

2. Bidders intent on submitting a proposal should so notify the representative identified on the RFP cover page no later than 6/15/2016.
3. Bidders must list at least 2 projects that are substantially similar to this project as part of their response, including references and examples of work.
4. A technical proposal must be provided that is not more than 8 pages. This technical proposal must provide an overview of the proposed solution. In addition, the technical proposal should provide a schedule and milestones, as applicable.
5. A price proposal must be provided that is not more than 3 pages. This price proposal should indicate the overall fixed price for the project as well as hourly rates and an estimated total number of hours, should CCCC decide to award a contract on an hourly rate basis.
6. Proposals must be signed by a representative that is authorized to commit bidder's company. If the proposal is submitted by an individual, the individual signing the proposal must be the same individual who will be performing the work and services. Subcontracting portions of submitted proposals are not acceptable under the terms of this RFP.
7. Proposals must be submitted electronically to ccccprogramrfp@ncte.org in PDF format. Mailed proposals will not be accepted.
8. If you have a standard set of terms and conditions, please submit them with your proposal. All terms and conditions will be subject to renegotiation.
9. Proposals must be received prior to 6/30/2016.
10. Proposals must remain valid until 9/30/2016.

Project Description

The purpose of this project is as follows:

As previously mentioned in the introduction, the post-graduate availability of writing programs and writing majors are growing, and there currently are too few adequate tools for future students to leverage in finding doctoral programs to suit their interests. Additionally, this aggregate information would be of great value to researchers working on scholarly issues related to writing doctoral programs and the associated job market.

The description of this project is as follows:

The proposed web-based system would serve this niche area to focus on three distinct audiences.

1. The prospective and current graduate students by providing the ability to cross reference and compare programs across multiple institutions on all data points collected to include by not limited to free-text searching;
2. The academic and market researchers by providing aggregate and customizable information and reports on all programs available across all data points collected; and
3. The faculty of rhetoric and composition, writing studies, professional writing, and technical programs along with graduate program administrators by providing an interface to keep their academic program's information current for the other respective target audiences.

Project Scope

Work Done To Date

Since March 2014, the committee designed and circulated a [pilot survey](#) of doctoral programs in rhetoric and composition using Google Docs. The survey questions included:

1. What is the name of your program? What is your program's website?
2. For the last ten years, please provide any figures on job placement for doctoral candidates in rhetoric and composition/writing studies/professional writing/technical communication.
3. Please provide any qualitative and/or statistical information regarding time-to-degree and completion rates for doctoral students with a focus or concentration of rhet/comp/professional writing/writing studies/technical communication for the past ten years.
4. Please provide the diversity breakdowns for your PhD cohorts over the past ten years. Please provide traditional demographic categories (race/ethnicity, international, gender) as well as other important diversity measures (orientation/gender identity, first generation college/grad students, etc.) that you pay attention to in your program.
5. Please indicate whether your doctoral program is a specialization inside an English department or located in a standalone department of rhetoric/writing. If

located inside an English PhD, do rhet/comp/writing studies/professional writing/tech com students need to complete courses in literature or literary studies for their degree (aka, a literary studies distribution)?

6. Please identify the distinguishing characteristics of your doctoral program/concentration in relationship to academic focus, geographic location, and faculty specializations.
7. Please list and describe the core coursework for your doctoral degree/concentration in rhetoric and composition/writing studies/professional writing/technical communication. If your program doesn't define a set of core courses, please describe how students put together an appropriate program of coursework.
8. Are graduate students required to take a professionalization seminar or introduction to doctoral study in rhetoric and composition/writing studies/technical communication course as part of their coursework? If yes, what specific course and why?
9. Please provide any external links to doctoral reading lists in rhetoric and composition/writing studies/professional writing/technical communication. If your program doesn't have a defined/set list of readings, please describe how students assemble core/field reading lists (in contrast to concentration/focus lists). Hyperlinks are welcome.
10. Please indicate the acceptance rate (what percentage of applicants do you accept) of your doctoral program/concentration in rhetoric and composition/writing studies/professional writing/tech com. How many doctoral students are in your r/c/writing studies/technical communication doctoral program/concentration? How many are typically accepted in a given year? Hyperlinks are welcome.
11. What enrichment opportunities does your program provide doctoral students, including research groups, community-based research opportunities, Writing Center assistantships and administrative opportunities, internships, editorial positions, RA positions, TA positions, and/or graduate WPA positions? Please indicate which opportunities provide funding for graduate students. Hyperlinks are welcome.
12. How many rhetoric and composition/writing studies/professional writing/technical communication graduate faculty do you have? How many rhetoric and composition doctoral students? What is the faculty to doctoral student ratio of your program? Hyperlinks are welcome.

13. How many doctoral students in your program do you anticipate going on the market in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020?
14. What kinds of support structures do you have in place for students who are going on the market? Example: Job market group mentorship, one on one mentoring, workshops, etc.
15. What market changes has your program seen over the last five years? If there has been a noticeable change, how has your doctoral program responded to those changes?
16. Who can we contact for any follow up questions about your program? E-mail address?

Eight doctoral institutions (representing a variety of programmatic configurations, from large programs to small concentrations inside English depts) have completed the pilot study. The task force has also reviewed program and placement data from the pilot.

Scope Applicable to this Request

The listed items that follow entail the scope of remaining work this request encompasses and should be met to achieve successful completion of the project. The successful bidder will be responsible for these items.

Web Based System – Standard User Requirements

The goals of the web-based system from an end-user standpoint would be as follows:

1. Provide a homepage and set of public landing pages of the system describing with text and hyperlinks what it is and does. These pages to the system will be simple and provide the introduction to view or submit survey data.

The pages will showcase, in an editable format, a brief description of the system, provide options for how to use and how to search for graduate programs (for students) through the system, display survey data, and update program information on the system (for graduate program administrators), and to use the data for research purposes. It would be helpful, if on these publicly facing pages, there was a list of the questions/information categories for those graduate program administrators who will be submitting or updating their data could see the questions to know what information to prepare before taking the survey. These pages will also provide information and a link back to become a member of CCCC via the NCTE (<https://secure.ncte.org/store/ccc>) website.

All of this content could be part of one editable content block on a per page basis

such as with classic CMS functionality.

2. Provide a login and authentication subsystem for the functionality to submit, edit, and view questions and results of the survey, and for doctoral program administrators to maintain their program's information. The creation of such user accounts should use an email verification process to prevent duplicates and to guarantee emails are verified by activation link by the recipient before an account is activated. Post activation welcome and account role change messages via configurable SMTP for all accounts is a requirement.
3. Provide a web interface to capture the same 16 data questions above plus a few select additional questions.
 - a. The selected development firm building this system will need to follow the same formatting of data capture in the questions as seen within the [Google Docs pilot survey](#).
 - b. The select additional questions that needed to be added to the 16 core questions will ask about time-to-degree, job placement, and diversity of each program.
 - c. Character limits for longer survey questions can be set to 5000 characters.
4. Display back the general results (for the public and anyone doing research) from the same 16 data capture questions and select limited additional questions above by a results page offering the ability to filter all or select questions with updated results (the same as the filters now in the pilot survey above with the addition of 3 other questions). Full-text searching is a requirement of this filtering capability.
5. The branding, stylistic themes, logos, and colors should be in line with the official [CCCC website](#). Permission to the winning bidder is granted to copy and reuse logos and associated styles and stylesheets for the purposes of this project.
6. The system is required to be responsive for viewing/using on all types of mobile and desktop devices.
7. The system would need to follow ADA compliance guidelines (<http://www.section508.gov/>).
8. The system will need "forgot your password" functionality.

Web Based System – Researcher and Administrator Requirements

The goals of the web-based system from a researcher and program administrator standpoint would be as follows:

1. The system would need to be role based: unauthenticated public user, graduate program administrator, user/graduate student, researcher, site administrator/sysadmin. The public user would see the homepage and informational pages and be able to search through the results of the surveys. The graduate program administrator role would need to be able to login to submit and edit previous year's surveys. The researcher role would need to be able to login to view and analyze all questions historically from all years with the ability to export the raw data results for further analysis. The system administrator would need the ability to update content on all site pages, add/modify the survey questions, and manage graduate program administrator and researcher roles and also approve requests by researchers to download the raw data. The user/graduate student authenticated role is identical to the public role; however, it has the ability to save a list of graduate programs for later review/comparison.
2. There would be a need for the system to have more than 1 system administrator account defined.
3. WYSIWYG editors would need to be built into the pages for the administrator to use in updating content. These editors need to be 508 compliant.
4. The web system will store and maintain the survey questions, versions, survey results over years, programs, and user accounts in a relational database. For the database, MySQL is preferable, but not required. The final database needs to be in a platform that is easily backed-up by common backup solutions.
5. The raw data export for the researcher role would need to provide export options in formats such as csv, xlsx, or a PDF.
6. Build out functionality for those with system administrator access the ability to modify/edit the survey fields so we can be iterative with our data collection. A running history of question and survey versions needs to be maintained, and answers/responses need to reference a specific question/survey version.
7. The system would need to store an editable profile for the graduate program administrator and researcher so they could change their credentials as needed. The profile for the graduate program administrator would then also need to

display any previous survey details by date so they could make edits.

8. The login functionality for the graduate program administrator would request and store their first name, last name, email, and password. As part of the initial login process, we will need to ask a “who am I” question or provide a drop down of the 2 roles: graduate program administrators or researcher, for the purposes of role rights assignment
9. Those completing the login form who select they are a researcher, and thus wanting to download the raw survey data, would need to go through an approval process by a system administrator who would be alerted via configurable SMTP email.

Web Based System – General Requirements

The goals of the web-based system from general standpoint would be as follows:

1. The selected firm would build and potentially host this new web based system. NCTE will setup a subdomain account and re-direct traffic from that sub-domain account to the site on the hosting provider. If hosting is not an option, recommendations on preferred hosting providers would be required.
2. A maintenance agreement including SLA definitions is required as the firm selected would not only be utilized to create but to maintain the system over the long term. The maintenance agreement would also include troubleshooting/on-call need expectations when there is a problem with the system that is not due to the hosting environment.

RFP & Project Timeline

While the completion timeline for this project is pending the approval of the accepted proposal by an elected committee, dates currently solidified are as follows:

- **Request for Proposal Issuance:** 5/13/2016
- **Intent of Submission Due By:** 6/15/2016
- **Submissions of Proposal Due By:** 6/30/2016
- **Selection of Top Bidder/Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders:** No Later Than 9/30/2016
- **Start of Negotiation/Scope Refinement and Clarification:** No Later Than 10/1/2016
- **Contract Award/Notification to Unsuccessful Bidders:** No Earlier Than 10/1/2016

Bidders may propose timelines based on these dates or later, but flexibility due to the nature of committee review is a necessity and will be evaluated accordingly.

Budget

At this time, we are seeking firms to help provide a cost framework to then provide recommendations back to the elected CCCC Executive Committee.

Evaluation Factors

CCCC will rate proposals based on the following factors, with cost being the most important factor.

1. Responsiveness to the requirements set forth herein
2. Relevant past performance and experience as indicated by samples of work and referrals
3. Cost, including an assessment of total cost of ownership

Unnecessary solution complexity or egregious project management cost padding will disqualify a proposal.

The Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and the National Council of Teachers of English reserve the right to award to the bidder that presents the best value to CCCC as determined solely by CCCC in its absolute discretion. Furthermore, the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and the National Council of Teachers of English reserve the right to refrain for awarding any bidder in the event of no clear proposal presenting best value under acceptable terms. In such an event, this RFP will become null and void, all submitted proposals will be disqualified, and a new Request for Proposals may be drafted at the discretion of the elected CCCC Executive Committee.