

Request for Quotation

Washington County Cooperative Library Services, Oregon

Reference Program Redesign Project

Washington County Cooperative Library Services (WCCLS) is seeking a consultant to analyze reference/information services in the county and to design a patron-focused, outcome-based model for information services based on best practices.

Background

Washington County, Oregon has a three-part mission for WCCLS: provide county funding for public library operations; provide support services to member libraries when it is more efficient and economical to do so; and provide direct service to special populations (i.e. homebound, children in child care, Spanish-speaking residents).

Currently there are twelve public library providers in fourteen physical locations that offer direct library service to the residents of the county (population approximately 500,000). They represent nine cities, two non-profit organizations and the County. Members share a common integrated library system (Polaris software), which provides inter-library borrowing to all county residents, and a central courier system which delivers materials from one library to another. In addition, there is one hospital library and a small college library. The total system-wide circulation for 2006-07 was about 7.4 million, with a total collection size of about 1.3 million items.

The WCCLS Central Services Reference Program currently provides second-level reference service to member libraries, coordinates and supplies direct digital reference service, coordinates interlibrary loan (OCLC) for member libraries, contracts with Beaverton City Library to provide telephone reference for all county residents, and licenses electronic databases and downloadable media for member libraries. The electronic resources budget for 2007-08 is \$177,700. Staff also represents the Cooperative in state and regional meetings and committees, such as the Oregon Digital Library Consortium (consortium of libraries contracting for downloadable media), L-net (statewide digital reference), and the Statewide Database Licensing Advisory Committee.

The direct delivery of reference services to the public is conducted by staff of member libraries. The extent of reference collections and depth of reference services provided vary from library to library, depending upon size and staffing.

Scope of Work

WCCLS is seeking assistance from a consultant with a strong working knowledge of reference operations and administration to provide an independent review of:

1. What are our patrons' information services needs?
2. What information services should be provided in Washington County? What outcomes shall we strive for to assure our patrons' needs are met?
3. How can we change our way of providing information services to attain the vision outlined in number 2?

4. What might the WCCLS Central Services Reference Program do to provide more efficient support of libraries' efforts to deliver information services?

WCCLS is seeking specific recommendations with pros and cons noted for each suggested change. The consultant will be required to visit or interview by phone key reference staff in at least 7 library sites, representing both large and small libraries, as well as the Central Services Reference staff.

Limits to Scope

Although the WCCLS Reference Program encompasses interlibrary loan services, those services are outside the scope of this study. All recommendations should be framed within the existing cooperative governance structure; review of governance and structure is outside the scope of this study.

Schedule and Quotation Submittal

- Proposals should be submitted by September 17, 2007.
- Contract work can begin upon execution of a *Washington County Personal Services Agreement*.
- Submit report with findings and recommendations to Barbara O'Neill (address below) within 2 months of execution of *Washington County Personal Services Agreement*.

- After review, a presentation to the WCCLS Policy Group (library directors and WCCLS Manager) will also be required (dates to be determined).

- Funding for this project does not exceed \$15,000.
- Include the following information in your response:
 - o Experience in performing similar studies for libraries;
 - o Outline of your plan for completing the project;
 - o Cost quotation;
 - o Identification of any additional staff that will be involved in the project including a description of their experience;

 - o Contact information for at least three library references for which similar work was performed.

Responses will be reviewed by a committee; follow-up clarification may be required. Submit responses to:

Barbara O'Neill, Senior Librarian
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