



Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify and obtain the services of a qualified firm to assist the Children's Board of Hillsborough County (CBHC) in conducting public opinion research that will support its community awareness and outreach efforts.

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

For RELEASE on January 3, 2011

Information Meeting:

January 14, 2011
9 – 11 a.m.
ELC Conference Room

Questions Due:

In Writing to Bobbi Davis
By 1 p.m.
January 21, 2011

Proposal Due:

February 18, 2011
By 4 p.m.

Luanne J. Panacek, Ed.D. Chief Executive Officer
Valerie Hubbard-Goddard, Board Chair

For further information, please contact:
Bobbi Davis, Ph.D.
Children's Board of Hillsborough County
(813) 204-1752 • bobbid@childrensboard.org

CHILDREN'S BOARD OF HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY
Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The intent of this solicitation is to identify and obtain the services of a qualified firm to assist the Children's Board of Hillsborough County (CBHC) in conducting public opinion research that will support its community awareness and outreach efforts.

Written proposals using the format described herein must be received by 4 p.m. on February 18th, 2011 at the CBHC, located at 1002 E. Palm Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33605 in order to be considered. Late proposals will not be accepted.

Informational meeting:

Attendance at the Informational meeting is not mandatory, but interested applicants are strongly encouraged to participate. The meeting provides organizations with an opportunity to seek clarifications about specific or technical requirements referenced in the proposal. It is the only opportunity to receive verbal instructions or verbal information regarding the services to be procured, contractual expectations, and other critical service delivery requirements. The meeting will be conducted on January 14, 2011 from 9 to 11 a.m. at the CBHC offices. All questions and the answers will be posted on the CBHC website following the meeting.

II. BACKGROUND

The CBHC was established in 1989 with the mission of improving the lives of children and families throughout Hillsborough County. Today, this is done by funding local prevention and early intervention supports and services, as well as providing leadership, planning and analysis, advocacy, technical assistance, training, information and education, and research and evaluation.

The CBHC's staff and Board have engaged in a multi-year strategic planning process to further CBHC's ability to deliver the greatest possible return on investment for our community's children and families. This work has included refining the agency's role as a strategic grant maker and simultaneously expanding its role as a catalyst for long-term solutions.

Past public opinion research has indicated that the CBHC, as an organization, was not clearly differentiated from other government and nonprofit organizations in our community. A key long-term objective of outreach activities would be to increase the number of citizens who are aware of the CHBC and understand the agency's critical value to the county.

III. OBJECTIVE

Last year, the CBHC funded more than 100 programs that touched over 200,000 citizens. While all of these programs and services are strategically targeted, the Board realizes that a community's needs are continually evolving and direct feedback from taxpayers is crucial to the continued success of the organization – our funded partners – and Hillsborough County's children and families.

In an effort to best assess the needs of Hillsborough County taxpayers, the CBHC is seeking to complete a scientific opinion survey of Hillsborough County residents on issues relating to children and families in our community.

The intent of this solicitation is to identify qualified organizations that could assist the CBHC in conducting this research to provide a baseline for measuring current community needs against potential future funding strategies in order to address these concerns quickly and effectively. To that end, the CBHC has prepared and issued this RFQ.

IV. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The CBHC seeks to obtain a vendor to provide public opinion polling and research to support its Community Education and Awareness Initiatives and promote family's access to services. These include:

- A. Identifying and measuring public awareness among key stakeholders and county citizens regarding CBHC and its value to the community, Identifying the local media consumption habits of families we seek to serve, and the distribution of that consumption (TV, radio, print, web).
- B. Conducting public opinion research to determine the order of importance or the value citizens' place on the services in which we invest. Identifying citizens' beliefs about issues facing our community's children and families as well as general perceptions about the CBHC, our funded partners, impact on the community, areas for improvement, etc.
- C. Conducting public opinion research to provide a baseline for measuring current community needs against potential future funding opportunities in order to support the CBHC's strategic plan: building system-wide capacity and promoting citizens' awareness and access to CBHC-funded services.
- D. Conducting customary research phases of project familiarization to include: survey instrument design, testing, focus groups, data collection, tabulation, analysis and reporting (including methodology, findings and benchmark figures).
- E. Providing a detailed scope of services – although the CBHC (in this RFQ) attempted to identify the services required, this should not constrain the firm in the development of a scope they believe is necessary to meet the Board's overall objectives. The CBHC will be receptive to alternative scopes of services and encourages creativity and innovation for the desired end results.
- F. Providing a list of full-time professionals on staff, by discipline, who will be directly involved in the project as well as how much of the work will be provided in-house versus how much of it (if any) will be contracted to an outside vendor.
- G. Serving the CBHC, ideally, through a multi-year partnership and act as the organization's sole resource in gauging public opinion on issues relating to children and families.

V. REQUIREMENTS

A. Services

The selected applicant will be responsible for providing all professional consulting services, staffing, supervision, and other services necessary to plan and execute the CBHC Public Opinion Research initiative described in Scope of Services Section. The vendor will work in collaboration with the CBHC to develop and finalize questions used in research and polling.

B. Reports

Any reports related to the CBHC Public Opinion Research Initiative will be prepared for the CBHC in a professional timely manner. These reports will be negotiated with the successful applicant as deliverables derived from Section V.

C. Invoicing

The selected applicant shall present invoices per the negotiated deliverable. A listing of hours incurred will accompany each invoice. The final payment will be paid upon resolution of any open issues or delivery of any remaining reports.

VI. QUALIFICATIONS

Organizations that will qualify for further review will demonstrate the following:

- Experience in conducting a minimum of two countywide successful public opinion polling and research initiatives for non-profit social service organizations.
- Demonstrated success in the development of research and polling strategies for Spanish-speaking audiences.
- The Submission of a pricing menu with cost options per 500 and 1,000 individuals polled and an estimate of the scope of polling required and a summary of methods to be employed.
- Experience as a full-service public opinion research consulting firm in political and public policy.
- Experience in working with non-profit social service agencies and/or other Childrens Service Councils throughout the state.
- Experience in both qualitative and quantitative research with a well-known client list as well as vast knowledge in polling diverse audiences.
- Discussion of their philosophy on opinion surveying in a public setting and provision of preferred methodologies and rationale.
- Knowledge of regional and national benchmarks with comparisons.
- Review projects of a similar nature, including a complete description of the project, the year performed, client references and duration.

VII. EVALUATION & SELECTION

A. Evaluation Process and Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated using three sets of criteria. Firms meeting the Mandatory Criteria will have their proposals evaluated and scored for technical qualifications, relevant experience, cost effectiveness, creativity of methodology and approach. The following represent the principal selection criteria and relative weighting:

Mandatory Criteria

1. A measurable record of success in performing public opinion research for campaigns for non-profits in the social service sector (minimum of 4 non-profit client references).
2. Understanding of the non-profit social services sector and a familiarity with the challenges facing non-profits as demonstrated by previous client experience.
3. The ability to document success working with stakeholders from diverse ethnicities and cultures.
4. No conflict of interest with the CBHC, its Board, Board Committees or with regard to any other work performed by the firm for the CBHC.
5. Adherence to the instructions on preparing and submitting the information in this Request for Qualifications including an application submitted on or before the deadline .
6. Demonstration of being a full-service public opinion research and communications consulting firm with political and public policy experience.
7. Experience in working with non-profit social service agencies and other Childrens Service Councils throughout the state.
8. Must have experience in both qualitative and quantitative research with a well-known client list as well as knowledge in polling diverse audiences.

Scoring Criteria:

1. Expertise and experience of the applicant: 30 Points Maximum
 - a. The firm's past experience and documented results achieved on comparable projects.
 - b. The quality and availability of the firm's professional personnel to be assigned to the engagement.
 - c. The quality and experience of the firm's management support personnel to be available for technical consultation.
 - d. Experience with communications projects specifically for human services non-profit organizations.

- e. Relevancy, credibility and response of 3-5 client references for whom the vendor has performed branding and marketing programs.
2. Methodology and Approach: 50 Points Maximum
 - a. Responsiveness of the proposal in clearly stating an understanding of the scope and nuances of the specific work to be performed as well as relevant issues.
 - b. Adequacy of proposed staffing plan for various segments of the engagement.
 - c. Proven project management techniques.
 - d. Level of detail in analysis and recommendations to obtain data and strategies that may be employed to obtain that data.
 - e. A detailed and prioritized timeline.
 3. Cost: 20 Points Maximum
 - a. Realistic, practical use of the resources in cost-efficient strategies.
 - b. Costs are linked to scope of work and follow a logical timeline.

B. Review and Selection

Following the initial scoring, applicants may be asked to present their proposals in person to the Review Team before a final selection is made. Once the Review Team makes a final selection, the decision will be forwarded as a recommendation to the Chief Executive Officer and, in turn, to the Board of Directors. The final decision will be made by the Board.

VIII. GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

One (1) original unbound and ten (10) complete copies of each response must be received by 4 p.m. on February 18, 2011 at the CBHC. Responses must be clearly marked with the name and address of the applicant and "CBHC Public Opinion Research initiative." The responses must be in English and may be delivered by hand, courier, or mail. Responses sent by email or facsimile will not be accepted. Late responses will not be accepted.

Each applicant must submit the following for consideration. Any portion of the "Guidelines for Submitting Applications" section that is not included will automatically disqualify the applicant and the application will not be considered.

1. A Table of Contents that lists the material in the document by section and page number.
2. Description of the firm, including history, client list, methodologies, awards or other relevant industry recognition, and partnerships or alliances with third parties. Applicants submitting proposals may subcontract portions of the project. The name of the proposed subcontracting firms or individuals must be clearly identified in the proposal. Following the award of the contract, no additional subcontracting or

changes in subcontractors will be allowed without the express prior written consent of the CBHC (preference for use of local resources).

3. Relevant government and human services public opinion research experience.
4. Not less than four (4) references of clients from the non-profit and or government sector) for whom the firm has done similar work in the past three (3) years.
5. Total staff available for this project and the anticipated percent of work to be performed by each.
6. Resumes of all those who will be assigned to this project.
7. Applicants will be required to provide the following information on their approach:
 - a. Proposed project methodology (including any models or methodologies to be used in the analysis);
 - b. High-level project plan with tentative timeline and accompanying budget;
 - c. Resources required from the CBHC to carry out the proposed project methodology;
 - d. Level of staff and estimated number of hours each will spend on each segment of the engagement;
 - e. Approach to understanding the current mindset among taxpayers about the CBHC;
 - f. Approach to identify goals and desired state;
 - g. Approach to developing measurable solutions.
8. The applicant is invited to include any promotional material pertaining to the firm or the engagement. The CBHC will consider any such promotional material as supplemental information.
9. Location of the office from which the project will be conducted and number of personnel in that office who would be working on the project.

IX. TIMELINE

The following selection process and anticipated timetable will be used:

Activity	Description	Due Dates
Proposal Released	Proposal available to the community. Can be requested through Bobbi Davis, 813 204-1752; or obtained on CBHC website www.childrensboard.org .	January 3, 2011
INFORMATION SESSION	A voluntary pre-submission information session will take place for organizations interested in applying for the CBHC Public Opinion Research initiative. The purpose of this briefing is to familiarize potential applicants with project requirements and answer questions relative to submission of the application and review process. Applicants without access to e-mail should note this at the Briefing Session so that other arrangements can be made for follow-up communication.	January 14, 2011 From 9 to 11 a.m. ELC Conference Room
QUESTIONS	No interpretations of the meaning of this RFQ and its specifications, or other documents related to this process, will be made to any applicant orally outside of this briefing to ensure equal opportunity. Every request for such interpretation must be in writing, addressed to Bobbi Davis. (Email: bobbid@childrensboard.org) Any and all such interpretations and any supplemental instructions will be posted on the CBHC website, www.childrensboard.org .	To be given consideration, requests for interpretation must be received at the CBHC no later than 1 p.m. January 21, 2011
Deadline to Submit Proposals	Submit proposal using the format suggested.	February 18, 2011 due at the CBHC by 4 p.m., according to CBHC clock
Review Team	The Review Team will meet to review and rate proposals. Its recommendation will be forwarded to the Executive Director of the CBHC and may be forwarded to the Board for final approval. This date may be revised depending on the volume of applications.	Week beginning February 21, 2011
Contract Award	A contract will be awarded by the CBHC to an applicant having the best overall qualifications based on the rating criteria and recommendations of the Review Team. However, it should be noted that the ten-member Board of the CBHC is the only body authorized to approve funding recommendations, allocate funds and direct staff to negotiate contracts. The successful applicant to enter into contract negotiation with the CBHC will be notified in writing. No contract shall exist between the CBHC and the selected applicant until a contract is approved and executed by both parties. Negotiation to finalize contract scope of services, including a finalized budget, will be concluded to reach a target contract start date of (anticipated) March 1, 2011.	Anticipated March 1, 2011

X. Inquiries

For questions pertaining to the application, please contact:

Bobbi Davis
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1002 E Palm Avenue, Tampa, Florida 33605
(813) 204-1752
bobbid@childrensboard.org

Contact with other personnel of the CBHC, CBHC Board members, or its committee members may be grounds for elimination from the evaluation process.