



Request for Proposal

Key RFP Dates:

RFP Issued: May 28, 2010
Written Questions Due: June 2-7, 2010
Submit Proposal By: June 14, 2010

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) NO. SFN-RFP-01132010

Notice to Offerors Calling for Proposals for - Social Media Needs Analysis and Business Case Recommendations for SfN

SfN is considering the member service opportunities and business model impacts associated with social media in the current environment. At this time, the organization is looking for an initial, thorough analysis on the subject and the potential for a long-term consulting relationship to help SfN strengthen its capacity and effectiveness in this arena.

SfN has taken modest steps into the social media platform via an active Facebook Fan Page and a LinkedIn Group. In addition, SfN has licensed technology that could be used to implement a private social networking community, which is scheduled for pilot testing later this year for a small number of membership groups (SfN committees and participants in several professional development programs). SfN wants to conduct a needs analysis that will review the current environment, address the organization's business model in relation to social media, explore opportunities, and develop a strategy for establishing a strong presence in the social media environment in a way that enhances its mission and strengthens its business model.

CAUTION: Proposals received after June 14, 2010 will be considered at SfN's discretion.

We look forward to receiving your proposal and invite any questions you may have regarding this RFP.

Sincerely,

Paul T. Troxell
Procurement Manager

Society for Neuroscience
1121 14th Street, NW
Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20005
202-962-4000
(f) 202-962-4947

No. RFP-05272010

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (“RFP”) IS NOT IN ANY MANNER TO BE CONSIDERED AN ORDER FOR, OR AN OFFER FOR, THE SERVICES / PRODUCTS SET FORTH HEREIN, NOR WILL THE SOCIETY FOR NEUROSCIENCE (SfN) INCUR OR BE LIABLE FOR ANY COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PREPARATION OF YOUR OFFER. SfN RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY OR ALL OFFERS. ACCEPTANCE OF YOUR RESPONSE IN NO WAY OBLIGATES SfN TO ISSUE SUBSEQUENT RFP’S OR CONTRACT INFORMATION TO RESPONDING FIRMS.

BY ACKNOWLEDGMENT OR RESPONSE TO THIS RFP, THE FIRM HEREBY CERTIFIES THAT NO GRATUITIES WERE OFFERED OR SOLICITED BY ANY SfN EMPLOYEE, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY. ANY SITUATION WHERE A GRATUITY IS SOLICITED BY A SfN ASSOCIATE MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO SfN’S DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT (202) 962-4000.

About Society for Neuroscience (SfN): SfN is a nonprofit membership organization of basic scientists and physicians who study the brain and nervous system. Neuroscience includes the study of brain development, sensation and perception, learning and memory, movements, sleep, stress, aging and neurological and psychiatric disorders. It also includes the molecules, cells and genes responsible for nervous system functioning. Recognizing the tremendous potential for the study of the brain and nervous system as a separate field, the Society was formed in 1970. It has grown from 500 members to nearly 41,000 and is the world's largest organization of scientists devoted to the study of the brain and nervous system.

CONFIDENTIALITY/NON-DISCLOSURE

This RFP is confidential and the property of SfN. Each person that receives this document, by its acceptance hereof, represents and agrees that it will not distribute or provide information contained herein to any person not directly responsible for generating a response to the RFP. Firms wishing to respond to this RFP must sign and date the "Non-disclosure" agreement then fax it to the attention of SfN's Procurement Manager at 202-962-4947.

A Firm may disclose relevant parts of the RFP to partners and/or subcontractors provided that the partner and/or subcontractors first execute a non-disclosure agreement identical to the non-disclosure agreement signed by the Firm. Distributing or sharing of this RFP by the Firm with any other party must be approved in writing by the SfN Procurement Manager.

Non-Disclosure of Information. Confidential Information means any and all information and technical data of a proprietary or confidential nature disclosed or made available by a party hereto to the other party in the course of performing hereunder, whether in written, oral, magnetic, photographic, optical or other form and whether now existing or hereafter created, including, without limitation, all Trade Secrets, know-how, information systems, technology, data, computer programs, processes, methods, operational procedures, plans, strategies or results, software, source code, drawings, databases, schematics, blueprints, memoranda, flow charts, specifications, test results, production, lab or engineering techniques and manuals, methodologies, all related intellectual property or its physical embodiments, membership lists or information, industry and competitive information, strategic business plans, marketing plans, product and proposed product information, pricing and cost data arrangements and agreements with distributors, licensors and licensees, information concerning employees, financial information and other information of a similar nature that is not generally disclosed by such party to the public, whether any of the foregoing is disclosed by access to a party's facilities or documents or by conversations with a party's employees, directors or consultants. "Confidential Information" shall not include any information which (i) is proven by written evidence to have been in a receiving party's possession prior to disclosure by the other party; (ii) is received from a third party having the right to disclose such information; (iii) is or hereafter becomes public knowledge through no act or fault of a receiving party; (iv) is proven by written evidence to have been independently developed by a receiving party without access to the Confidential Information of the other party; and (v) is required by law to be disclosed; provided that to the extent practicable, the other party is first given notice of the required disclosure and an opportunity to seek appropriate legal relief to prevent such disclosure or limit its use and further disclosure.

Each party acknowledges and agrees that during the RFP process, access to certain Confidential Information belonging to the other party may be required. Each party agrees that it shall keep such Confidential Information in strict confidence and shall not disclose it to any person, firm, partnership or corporation other than to its agents or employees who have a need to know such information in order to perform hereunder, nor use the same for any purpose other than performance hereunder. Each party shall advise all such agents and employees with access to Confidential Information of the other party of its obligations with respect thereto. Notwithstanding the foregoing, each party shall be and remain liable and responsible for the confidentiality obligations of its agents and employees. In addition to the foregoing, each party shall protect and safeguard Confidential Information of the other party by using the same degree of care, but no less than a reasonable degree of care, to prevent the unauthorized use, dissemination or publication of such Confidential Information as such party uses to protect its own confidential or proprietary information of a like nature.

Authorized Officer or Director

Date

DEVELOPMENT COSTS AND CONDITIONS

- Neither SfN nor its representatives shall be liable for any expenses a Firm incurs in connection with preparation of a response to this RFP. Applicants should prepare their proposals simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise description of the Firm's ability to meet the requirements of this RFP.
- The issuance of this RFP does not commit SfN to award a contract, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request or to actually procure the requested services.
- SfN reserves the right to reject any or all the RFP applications submitted in response to this solicitation, due to the lack of responsiveness, changes in SfN's operating objectives, lack of funding, or for any reason determined by SfN and at the sole discretion of SfN.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Time Extension: SfN may for good and sufficient reason extend the response deadline, in which case all potential vendors will receive an addendum setting forth the new time and date.
- Request for Additional Information: Prior to the final selection, vendors may be required to submit additional information that SfN deems necessary to further evaluate the vendor's qualifications. As part of the evaluation process vendors shall furnish such additional information as SfN may reasonably require.
- Denial of Reimbursement: SfN will not reimburse vendors for any costs associated with the preparation and submission of a proposal or for any travel or other costs that are incurred.
- SfN will not be liable for any costs incurred by the vendor in connection with interviews (i.e., travel, accommodations, etc.) conducted as part of the evaluation or negotiation process.
- Gratuity Prohibition: Vendors shall not offer any gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value to any associate at SfN for the purpose of influencing consideration of this proposal. If an SfN associate solicits a gratuity, the vendor is obligated to inform SfN's Deputy Executive Director.
- Right of Withdrawal: A proposal may not be withdrawn before the expiration of one hundred and eighty (180) days from the proposal due date.
- Right of Negotiation: SfN reserves the right to negotiate with the selected vendor the exact terms and conditions for a contract.
- Liability and Insurance: The selected firm shall purchase and maintain insurance in the amounts and types as needed for the protection from claims caused by the contractor's personnel or work, or by any subcontractor performing work for the contractor.
- Legal Compliance: In connection with the furnishing of supplies or performance of work under the contract, the contractor agrees to comply with the Fair Labor Standard Act, Equal Opportunity Employment Act, and all other applicable Federal and State laws, regulations and executive orders to the extent that the same may be applicable.
- Disqualification: No award will be made to any firm, person or party, parent or subsidiary that is de-barred from providing services to the federal or state government, or with which SfN has an outstanding claim against or a financial dispute.
- Performance and Approval of Sub-Consultants: The vendor will perform the project as an independent contractor and not as an agent or employee of SfN. The vendor shall secure written permission from SfN before subcontracting any part of the project. Such permission should be obtained during the proposal evaluation stage.

- **Licenses, Permits & Taxes:** The price or prices for the work shall include full compensation for all taxes, permits, etc. that the vendor is or may be required to pay. SfN is a tax exempt entity.
- **Minority/Women Business Enterprise (MWBE) Policy:** It is the policy of SfN to provide minority and women owned business enterprises with equal opportunity for participating in the selling of goods and services to SfN. In cases where a vendor plans to sub-contract a portion of the work, it is required to make “A Good Faith Effort” to engage qualified MWBEs for such work. Vendors shall keep records of such efforts, when applicable, that are adequate to permit a determination of compliance with this requirement. If subcontracting is involved in the proposal, a Proposed Schedule of Minority/Women Business Enterprise Participation shall also be submitted.

Please refer to the following items during preparation of your Proposal:

1. Summary & Statement of Work:

SfN wants to conduct a needs analysis that will review the current environment, address the organization’s business model in relation to social media, explore opportunities, and develop a strategy for establishing a strong presence in the social media environment in a way that enhances its mission and strengthens its business model.

The scope of work/deliverables for Phase I of the project include:

1. A whitepaper for staff that explores the details of SfN’s needs, opportunities, challenges, potential pitfalls, timeframes, etc.
2. An executive summary that provides a high-level assessment of the environment for SfN leadership.

In their submissions, vendors should provide a proposal for the cost of phase I. Subsequent to successful completion of Phase I, the consultant will be considered a potential preferred provider of consulting support for phase 2 and phase 3, which would be included in the contract as options and could be authorized on a task order basis with more fully defined scope at a later time. These services would include:

1. Ongoing consultation through analysis to possible development and implementation of a strategy.
2. Recommendations for potential vendors and tools.

Expanded information on deliverables and ongoing consultation are as follows:

Phase 1 — Preliminary assessment/audit: This phase will provide SfN with credible information to inform SfN’s understanding of what may be needed, why, how, and by when. The White Paper should include an evaluation of:

- Social media activities SfN might consider given its membership composition, reach and size
- Who else is in the neuroscience-related social media space and may present a threat/competition? Are there potential partnerships that might make sense?
- The likely potential for revenue generation through advertising or other opportunities, and barriers to revenue generation. Where possible, these should be based on quantitative analysis of advertising trends and organizational case studies.
- The role and limitations of proprietary vs. open platforms, and how organizations best use and mix the two.
- Whether it is possible to structure the social media environment to maximize productivity and civility of conversation, consistent with SfN mission and values, and if so, models of structures/staffing that do so.
- Based on the experiences of other similar groups, what are the challenges and traps to be avoided?
- The urgency of action, given opportunities and competition.
- Potential staffing needs and models.

Where available, information in this phase should include/be based on case studies from comparable organizations that have developed social media communities.

Phase 2 — Social media platform design / analysis. Identified consultant would provide assistance with strategic development of site and implementation:

- Development and execution of phases and stages
- Assistance with developing SfN oversight to maintain and guide the social media space, including topics of discussion and policing of potentially inappropriate content
- Potential look and feel of an SfN community
- Potential selection and engagement of volunteer leaders to engage conversation
- Development of metrics to measure success
- Other consulting needs as identified

Phase 3 – Implementation/Evaluation. Identified consultant would provide assistance with:

- Go live
- Structuring content and populating
- Analyzing/monitoring/incorporating feedback from participants
- Other consulting needs as identified

TIMEFRAMES

Initial assessment, including a draft whitepaper for staff, must be completed by July 12. After receiving comments, feedback and questions from SfN staff, the white paper should be finalized by July 26, and an executive summary by August 2 in preparation for SfN’s summer Council meeting later in August.

2. Schedule:

This request for proposal will be governed by the following schedule:

Release RFP	May 28, 2010
Registration	June 3, 2010
Question and Answer Period	June 2-7, 2010
Proposals Due	June 14, 2010

SfN may delay scheduled due dates if it is to the advantage of SfN to do so. SfN will notify respondents of all changes in scheduled due dates by written notice.

3. Registration:

All Firms that will submit an offer in response to this RFP are required to register with SfN. To register, the Firm must send an e-mail containing a point of contact, statement of intent to file a proposal, and the Firm’s e-mail address to rfp@sfn.org by COB June 3, 2010. The signed and dated “Nondisclosure” agreement must be received by SfN no later than June 7, 2010.

4. Supplier Questions:

Questions may be e-mailed to rfp@sfn.org until 12:00 PM EST on June 7, 2010. No further questions will be addressed after this date. SfN will respond to all questions submitted via the e-mail address provided by the registered participants. It is SfN policy to compile all questions and answers, unless they are so specific as to identify the firm, sending them out to all registered participants.

NOTE: Registered firms are to use the rfp@sfn.org email address and are NOT to contact any SfN associate directly without first clearing it with the Procurement Manager. You can contact the Procurement

Manager at 202-962-4028 or use the above e-mail address. Anyone caught violating this rule risks being eliminated from the RFP process.

5. Proposal Requirements:

- **Content of Proposal**

The proposal must be submitted using the format as indicated below in the proposal format guidelines.

- **Preparation of Proposal**

Each proposal shall be prepared simply and economically, avoiding the use of elaborate promotional material beyond those sufficient to provide a complete, accurate and reliable presentation.

- **Number of Proposal Copies**

Please submit one electronic copy of your proposal.

- **Submission of Proposals**

Please submit proposals to:

Society for Neuroscience
1121 14th Street, NW, Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20005
Attention: Paul Troxell
Telephone: (202) 962-4000
Email: ptroxell@sfn.org

All proposals must be delivered to the above office no later than 4:00 P.M. Eastern time on June 14, 2010. Proposals received after the above date and time will not be considered.

- **Rejection of Proposals**

The Society reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any irregularity or informality in a proposal, and to accept or reject any item or combination of items, when to do so would be to the advantage of Society. It is also within the right of the Society to reject proposals that do not contain all elements and information requested in this document. The Society for Neuroscience shall not be liable for any losses incurred by those firms who submit proposals throughout this process.

- **Proposal Format Guidelines**

Interested contractors are to provide the Society with a thorough proposal using the following guidelines:

1. Proposal should be typed and as brief as possible.
2. Each proposal will adhere to the following order and content of sections.
 - Proposal should be straightforward and concise and provide “layman” explanations of technical terms that are used.
 - Emphasis should be concentrated on conforming to the RFP instructions, responding to the RFP requirements, and on providing a complete and clear description of the offer.
 - Proposals, which appear unrealistic in the terms of technical commitments, lack of technical competence, or are indicative of failure to comprehend the complexity and risk of this contract, may be rejected.
3. The following proposal sections are to be included in the proposer’s response:
 - A. **Cover Letter:** A cover letter, not to exceed three pages in length, should summarize key elements of the vendor’s proposal. An individual who is authorized to bind the company must sign the letter. The letter must stipulate that the proposed terms will be valid for a period of at least 180 days. Indicate the address and telephone number of the

contractor's office located nearest to the Society's headquarters, and the office from which the project will be managed.

The Proposer must include in the proposal a complete disclosure of any alleged significant prior or ongoing contract failures, and any civil or criminal litigation or investigation pending that involves the company or in which the vendor has been judged guilty or liable. Failure to comply with the terms of this provision will disqualify any proposal. The Society reserves the right to reject any proposal based upon the Proposer's prior history with the Society or with any other party, which documents, without limitation, unsatisfactory performance, adversarial or contentious demeanor, or significant failure(s) to meet contract milestones or other contractual failures.

B. Company Profile: Describe your company, including the number of years in operation.

C. Scope of Services: Describe how project will be provided. Include a detailed list of tasks and deliverables. Provide a summary of the approach to the project.

D. Experience and capacity: Describe background and experience of individuals involved and ability to provide service.

E. Personnel listing: Indicate specific personnel who will be assigned to the project and the number of hours each will spend. Provide resumes of individuals that will be involved.

F. Cost of services: Indicate proposed cost of service including how such costs were determined based on rates and direct costs. Also, provide a billing schedule.

G. Timeline: Provide a proposed timeline for completing the project.

H. References and Current clients: List references and clients that can be contacted from similar projects to size and scope and examples of similar projects if available.

I. Stability factors: List indicators of company and project stability, including client base, assets, and contingency plans.

6. Qualification and Evaluation:

The "Social Media Needs Analysis and Business Case Recommendations for SfN" will be led by a staff team covering various SfN departments. The vendor must assign a project coordinator as SfN's primary point of contact.

Criteria used in the evaluation of proposals will include the following:

- Quality, thoroughness and clarity of the proposal
- Demonstrated understanding of the Scope of Services
- Organization, management, and technical approach to project
- Demonstrated experience in one or more of the fields of expertise required to complete this project
- Qualifications and experience of staff
- Demonstration of capacity to successfully complete the project
- Capability or potential to offer Bid Alternates
- Review of references/examples
- Financial responsibility, stability and capacity of company
- Cost to provide requested services and deliverables
- Ease of use for members
- Seamless integration with Personify
- Additional revenue opportunities/site monetization/partnership

- Ability to meet prescribed deadlines/desired outcomes

SfN reserves the right to reject any and all proposals. Cost is one of several evaluation criteria. SfN may not necessarily select the proposal with the lowest cost estimate.