

## RFP 2024-1600-0230-SNAP-Ed

### Questions and Answers

#### 1. Deadline for Proposals

- a. Please clarify the deadline for receipt of the proposals. Is the submission date May 16, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. (as stated on page 4, Sec. 1.03) or May 17, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. (as stated on page 5, Sec. 1.11)?
- b. Due dates noted in the RFP are conflicting. See: Page 4 Thurs May 16 at 4p. Page 5 says Fri May 17 @ 4pm.

**A: I apologize for any confusion. The deadline for return of proposals is 4:00 pm Friday, May 17, 2024.**

#### 2. Contract Incumbency

- a. Is there an incumbent for this contract?
- b. Is there an incumbent contractor for this social marketing campaign? If so, can we have a copy of the submissions and scoresheets for the procurement of that contract?

**A: There is no Incumbent for this contract. The contract expired in September of last year. The State determined it was not eligible for extension. The previous contractor was engaged via an Alternate Procurement (Procurement Vernacular "SS RAP"). Thus, there was no PEC, selection committee or notes to the effect. Therefore, the RFI was posted to establish if there were vendors interested in providing these services. With 14 responses to the RFI, it was evident that competition existed. Thus, using the input received from the RFI, this formal solicitation was developed and released.**

#### 3. Would it be possible for you to share the responses to the original RFI?

**A: Those are deemed proprietary, thus non-releasable. The responses to this RFP become the property of the state, however, once a winner is selected. So, I will be able to release those once we go to contract.**

#### 4. Anonymity.

- a. Can you please clarify the request for anonymous submission?  
**A: The anonymous submission requirements are set so the name of the offeror or knowledge of the offeror of the brand does not influence the PEC member's decision making. The intent is to allow for an independent assessment of the offeror's submission, with as little as possible distracting details.**
- b. If we need to stay anonymous, what are we allowed to show on the resumes?  
**A: Redact the name of your firm from the documents you submit.**
- c. Does the portfolio with work samples need to be anonymous?  
**A: Yes. If there is branding on the samples, they ought to be removed when submitting.**

#### 5. On Page 24, in Sec. 5.04, it appears evaluation questions #1 and #3 are not finished. Can you clarify these evaluation criteria?

**A: These questions relate to the experience questions in Sec 4.04.1 and 4.04.2**

**Question 1: How well did the offer detail their specific experience in...**

**Question 3: To what degree did the offeror include other specific areas of expertise, such as...**

**The PEC will be evaluating for how well you detailed your experience and for**

each of the questions (question 1), and if you offered any additional skills and experience that was not specified as a question (question 3). Ex: I'm asking about your specific experience as a Mountain Climbing Guide, and you include that experience, and also add that you are additionally back country ski guide with specific experience in avalanche mitigation and search and rescue.

**6. Work Plan Due Date**

**7. What is the date for approval of the workplan? RFP lists February 12, 2024**

**8. Page 11 - #5 budget for campaign. Approval date states Feb 12, 2024. That seems to be an error. What is actual date?**

**A: The workplan approval is expected by 60 days after the contract is negotiated and signed by all parties. In the State of Alaska Procurement Vernacular "Fully Executed".**

**9. Registered Dietician/Contract Workers**

- a. Does the dietician have to be on staff at the agency, it cannot be subcontracted?
- b. Will the review committee consider an agency that has a contract relationship with a Registered Dietitian for the purposes of #3 on the list of Mandatory Requirements? Language currently describes a staff position, implying a W-4 employment relationship is required.
- c. Can the required "Registered Dietitian on staff" be a 1099 subcontractor or do they need to be a full- or part-time W-2 agency employee?
- d. Do subcontractors need to have a physical presence in Alaska?
- e. Regarding a registered dietitian, the requirement of having a registered dietitian is mentioned but there are no details. Would the department like any specific information on the dietitian?
- f. For the minimum requirements, the Submittal Form F requires the Registered Dietitian to have 5 years of experience. Does this experience need to be specifically as an RD or can the experience be related to the overall scope of work of the contract? For example, if they have 4 years of experience as a registered dietitian and 2 additional years of experience working on social marketing campaigns related to food security and fruit/vegetable consumption prior to becoming an RD, does that meet the minimum qualifications spelled out in Submittal Form F?

**A. The agency would *like* to have this person as an employee of the selected firm, since the interaction with an experienced and knowledgeable RD is vital to the success of the program. However, "staff" in this case is not expected to be an employee. The evaluation criteria will evaluate skills and experience of the proposed RD as part of the skills and experience and management plan, as it will others on the proposed project team. To meet the minimum requirements, the proposed RD **MUST** have five years of experience as an RD to meet the requirements. Any subs used **DO NOT** need to be present in Alaska. If they are an integral part of the supporting team, they are expected to be available for communication/on call during regular state operating hours (7am-5pm, M-F) . This is why "staff" was used to describe the RD, as there will be frequent communication about the direction of the social messaging. Keep in mind that any subs used **MUST** have an Alaska Business License **BEFORE** a **CONTRACT** will be executed (not prior to proposing). The details required and expected of the RD are contained in the RFP itself.**

**10. Marketing Plan**

- a. Will you please make the 5-year marketing plan available or direct offers as to where we might find it online? We were unable to locate it on the State of Alaska's site.
- b. On Page 8, there is a reference to a Five-Year Marketing Plan. Can this be shared with prospective offerors?

**A: As shown above, two interested parties have inquired about the marketing plan used as an outline for the establishment (or thought process to build) the SNAP-Ed Social Marketing campaign. Unfortunately,**

no written or substantiated plan exists for the former “*Every Bite Matters*” which has transitioned to “*Every Bite Counts*”. The best resource for this is posted on the State of Alaska Web Page, And it can be found using this link: <https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/nutri/everybitecounts.aspx>

## 11. Measurement, Communications and Reporting

- a. Background Information: Section 2.01 on pages 7 and 8 - How, and how often, are the goals of the SNAP-ED marketing plan measured? We’re looking for clarity on the evaluation strategy as these goals are different, yet similar, to the aforementioned programmatic goals that reference utilizing BRFS, YRBS and CUBS surveys.
  - i. How often do you reevaluate the needs assessment? And by whom?  
For proving the 2% increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables by eligible adult and youth populations, is the expectation to use focus groups or in-person evaluations? It is easier to prove purchases than actual consumption.
  - ii. Is this the instrument you use to evaluate success of campaign?  
**A: All of the methods mentioned in the question above will be used to evaluate the process and progress of the campaign. The state is expecting the proposer to offer suggestions on how to judge the effectiveness of the campaign.**
- b. How does the SOA communicate with SNAP recipients, and are there current, ongoing communications? If yes, what is the frequency and communication method(s) used?  
**A: Yes, the state has periodic methods it communicates with receipts directly and indirectly using US Mail, email and by posting messages on the SNAP page. The items are done “as needed”.**
- c. Will we have access to SNAP recipient contact info such as addresses for direct mail campaigns, phone numbers for text or audio messaging campaigns, emails addresses, etc?  
**A: No. There are State and Federal Regulations that prevent disclosure of this information unless a detailed and allowable deviation is present. The HIPAA BAA is included as part of the RFP packet. It is worthwhile to familiarize yourself with the BAA and generally with the HIPAA rules and regulations to understand the limits to disclosure and protected information’s use.**
- d. Is the State able to track participant purchase history?  
**A: Yes, but disclosure of that information is limited by HIPAA rules. See answer above.**

## 12. UAF’s Program

- a. Will we have access to data and resources through UAF CES?
- b. Are we coordinating with UAF and their marketing plan?  
**A: No, UAF’s program is independent of this one.**

13. Can we get a full list of current social media channels that support “ Every Bite Matters.”

**A: There are no current social media channels, as this will be the only one. Also refer to question 7 above.**

14. Sec 4.04.3 – portfolio submission is submitted separately and is NOT included in the 8 page allotment for the section, correct?

**A: Yes, that is correct. The instructions are specific to what is expected.**

15. Can we send a download link for the proposal or only multiple email attachments of appropriate size?

**A: Download links are not acceptable. Only the methods described in the RFP**

Document are acceptable.

## 16. Cost proposal.

- a. Submittal Form H, Cost Proposal - With cost being evaluated at 40%, the current Cost Proposal exercise doesn't encourage the contractor to dedicate the resources necessary for effective media placement. Instead, it incentivizes underbidding.

**A: The offerors will be judged independently of cost as the proposal is evaluated. The Cost is only applied after the PEC has determined which proposals have the best rating. The Procurement Officer then reveals the proposed prices, and applies those independently of the PEC's decision.**

- b. We feel the current format of the Cost Proposal doesn't allow the State of Alaska to adequately review and compare the offeror's value, which we are particularly concerned with since cost is evaluated at 40%. Because there isn't a minimum requirement for the allocation of media placement dollars, it incentivizes offerors to significantly underbid the project, which we feel would not be in the best interest of the state.

- i. Would it be possible for the state to designate a specific portion of the budget for paid media as part of this exercise? If not, would it be possible to instead evaluate the Cost Proposal based on contracted rates by position only or some combination thereof?

**A: Your concern is noted, however the 40% cost is a required element due to state regulation.**

### c. Total Budget

- i. Submittal Form H, Cost Proposal - It was indicated in the RFP that the continuance of the campaign beyond year 1 would be predicated on its performance. Should the Cost Proposal exercise cover all five years or just one?
  - ii. Is the \$1 million budget for the initial 1-year contract term, or for the initial 1-year contract term AND the 4 potential additional extensions?

**A: The budget is to cover the entire length of the planned project. Thus \$200,000 a year for five years or any variation the proposer provides within the budget.**

**NOTE: Provided with these answers was a new version of the cost proposal. It now covers the entire proposed contract period.**

- d. Submittal Form H, Cost Proposal, Deliverable 1.3 -Media Placement Plan Are these line items for the development of these items or recommended media placement? We are unsure since Media Placement costs are addressed further down in Deliverable 4.

**A: If you have not already realized, the deliverables on submittal form H are taken directly from the deliverables in the contract (although they might be abbreviated). Each deliverable is a specific task your organization is expected to accomplish. How you do that, and how much it costs is expected to be part of your proposal.**