



**Date:** January 16, 2024

**To:** Prospective Applicants

**Re:** Question and Answers from January 10<sup>th</sup> RFP Discussion Session hosted by the Free Library of Philadelphia and Free Library of Philadelphia Foundation.

Headline	Question	Answer
<b>Research Report</b>	Are focus groups expected to inform the post-pandemic research report, or can data be pulled from other cultural organizations?	Yes, data can be included from other cultural organizations for the post-pandemic research report.  Part of your proposal should include your firm's ideas on project design.
<b>General</b>	What key characteristics/capabilities would your ideal partner have?	We hesitate to be too proscriptive as to provide space to access as innovative and diverse views to help co-create this initiative, since there are many components. At minimum and broadly, an understanding of the local Philadelphia context is advantageous, organizational strategy & assessment, and creativity. The Library's areas of opportunity and improvement hide complexity and we are searching for partners who will help us address these complexities.
<b>General</b>	The RFP states you will consider proposals that will cover "one or more" components of the strategic planning program requirements/deliverables. Are you	The goal is to be open to both ideas. We know there are firms that can cover the whole initiative and others that might take on components. We're open to various partnership models.



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	<p>planning on assembling a team of consultants for this scope, or are you hoping that, if needed, various consultants will align their skills and talent to collaborate and submit one proposal?</p>	
<p><b>Business Plan</b></p>	<p>Can you say more about why the business plan was sequenced before the Strategic Plan?</p>	<p>The linearity of the deliverables' timeline is for conceptualization and scheduling. For the business plan, there are current organizational, service, and business changes occurring at the library and the Foundation that will need to be captured, as part of the environmental analysis portion. That plan will be updated based on the suggested changes and information informed by the post-engagement research project results, results from focus groups, etc.</p>
<p><b>Vendor Expectations</b></p>	<p>What internal resources do you/will you have regarding coordination of meetings, committees, etc.? Or are you expecting that the chosen firm will provide administrative/scheduling/coordination assistance?</p>	<p>Depending on the deliverable, there is an expectation that the chosen firm will provide coordination and any other administrative support for the project design/ideas included in the proposal.</p> <p>Library internal resources are available for meeting coordination for meetings with internal stakeholders.</p>
<p><b>Milestones and Timelines</b></p>	<p>Are there any key milestones like the annual budget submission critical to the schedule and timeline?</p>	<p>Ultimately, we would like to complete the project before or accept any proposed changes before the appropriate year's budget submission process. While this project isn't dependent on it, there are some synergistic conversations that can occur and are related to some external efforts.</p> <p>There are some reporting requirements and milestones that are part of the grant agreement with Pew. The RFP deliverable dates and program timeline were constructed with those dates considered.</p>

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<b>Proposal Submission</b>	Would you like the cost proposal to be submitted as a separate attachment or is it acceptable to submit a single document?	It can be submitted as a section within your proposal and doesn't need to be a separate document or attachment.
<b>Budget</b>	What is the budget? For the FLP and FLPF to compare apples to apples when it comes to proposal review, it would be helpful to them and the consultants to have a ballpark amount.	We preferred not to dictate or provide indicative budget amounts for this proposal to provide consultants with the ability to propose the resources that they need to complete the described deliverables. We hope we have provided a good idea of the deliverables for each entity, the size and footprint of the agencies, and hope that consultants will be able to garner the scope for their cost estimates.
<b>General</b>	<Can you share if all these deliverables are being scheduled under one RFP?> Is this driven by specific operational and/or funding needs?	This is primarily operational as part of the Foundation's mission is to facilitate additional resources to support the Library's activities. Therefore, the work that the Library does for their strategic plan will need to be considered for the Foundation, linked but separate programming.
<b>Steering Committee</b>	Is the Steering Committee already created or are you interested in having the consultant suggest individuals for it?	No, we are open to suggestions. The working groups and steering committees in the presentation are suggested and we hope to work with the consultant to refine those ideas.
<b>General</b>	The RFP talks a lot about "engagement." Can you say anything more about how you define engagement, especially from the public?	Broadly what we mean by "engagement" in an urban public library context involves active involvement, participation, and interaction of the Library with the diverse communities of Philadelphia (i.e. its stakeholders).  Yes, ideally, it is a multiway connection, disseminating information and engaging with stakeholders about the Library and gathering information on the public needs of the Library.
<b>Environmental Analysis</b>	Has any internal strategy reporting begun on the "Environmental Analysis" plans?	We are in the process of constructing a current state/environmental analysis for the Library. This is for us to be able to

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		deliver a snapshot of the Library and the Foundation to the selected consultant (s).
<b>Selection Process</b>	Is there a vendor selection process for FLP and a separate one for FLPF, or will selected vendors provide services to both?	<p>Part of your proposals should detail which entity (FLP, FLPF, or both) you're bidding to provide service.</p> <p>We have a strong preference for the selected consultant (s) to provide services for both entities. Since the Foundations strategic plan is dependent on the Library's, a team that has worked on and understands the Library's plan would have a strong advantage in ensuring that the Foundation's plan is supportive of those efforts, while balancing the separate Foundation related organizational and operational components.</p>
<b>Vendor Collaboration</b>	For collaboration purposes, Will we have a list of consultants on this call?	Yes, the list of consultants was sent to participants on January 11, 2024 following the call.
<b>DEI Chief Officer</b>	Will DEI Chief officer be on the Steering Committee or Work Group?	<p>The DEI Officer will be included in the vendor selection committee.</p> <p>While the Steering Committee participants are determined once a stakeholder mapping exercise is complete, the DEI Officer is slated to be a participant on this committee.</p>
<b>Roadblocks and Challenges</b>	Can you expand on potential roadblocks or challenges regarding the creation of these plans?	We wanted to make the vendors aware of some of the challenges and roadblocks that we've identified with designing this initiative. These challenges should be considered when thinking about your proposals.
<b>Additional Deliverables</b>	Would you want consultants to develop an additional deliverable to publicly share best practices around business plans for public library systems with external foundation support?	Yes, we are open to the development of additional deliverables and an inclusion for their reasoning should be part of your proposal.

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		In general, part of the analysis for the business plan should include a landscape analysis of the business models of comparable public library systems.
<b>DEI Plan</b>	To clarify- you have a DEI plan to some degree, but this will take that further and ensure its infused within the other plans, is that correct?	All city agencies are required to have a DEI plan. The Chief DEI Officer has led those incredible efforts with the city. The DEI deliverable for the strategic initiative seeks to further operationalize and integrate diversity, equity, and inclusive principles into our service and business models.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	Can you share who the stakeholders are, in addition to PEW, and FLP and FLPF staff?	All individuals and organizations that operate within the Philadelphia area, broadly.
<b>Internal Socialization</b>	How has this been socialized internally?	<p>Internal engagement has occurred via roadshows with Library leadership and notification to all Library employees.</p> <p>We have also created the “<a href="#">Charting Our Future</a>”, informational page for all public and internal participants.</p> <p>We are also hoping that the selected consultant (s) will provide us with ideas to lead, manage, and strengthen our internal engagement strategy.</p>
<b>General</b>	From the proposal, is <it> that you want the consultants to be a strong lead –do you envision/want the consultant to be a Shepard and guide with staff doing the work and consulting or do you want the consultant to have project management responsibilities? EX. Leading listening sessions	While there will be opportunities to work collaboratively with internal Library stakeholders, the consultant(s) should take the lead on deliverables and have project management capabilities.
<b>Post – Implementation Analysis</b>	What, specifically, are you expecting consultants to include in the Post-Implementation Analysis (e.g. regular review and analysis vs. a one-time review/analysis/recommendations), and what implementation timeframe would you want consultants to focus	We imagine that the post-implementation analysis should contain both short term and long term recommendations on whether the Library and the Foundation have achieved the changes detailed in the implementation plan. It should also include an assessment on how those

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	<p>on for the Post-implementation Analysis?</p>	<p>changes have affected operational capacity, etc.</p> <p>Typically, this is done as a one-time analysis. However, if you can provide strong reasoning for a regular review and analysis in your proposal, it will be considered.</p> <p>In all, we are open to any reasonable suggestions on design from the consultant(s).</p>