Questions & Answers

Request for Qualifications for On-Call Strategic Communications, Media and Community Relations Professional Services

Date: May 6, 2025

To: Interested Firms and Individuals

From: Stephen Chun, Director for Communications

Subject: Request for Qualifications for On-Call Strategic Communications, Media and Community Relations Professional Services (RFQ 24/25-06)

The Transportation Authority received the following questions in italics during the Pre-Response Conference on April 28, 2025.

1. *Will a recording of the Pre-Response conference be shared on the SFCTA website?*

   A recording of the Pre-Response conference will not be posted on the Transportation Authority's website.

2. *Can the DBE goal be met by the Prime being a DBE?*

   Yes, the Prime can be a Disadvantage Business Enterprise.

3. *Can you please explain the 17% of DBE goal?*

   The overall DBE goal for the on-call strategic communications contract is 17%. However, the Transportation Authority will establish DBE, SBE, and/or LBE goals for each subsequent task order request, based on the project's funding sources and specific scope of work.

4. *Will you be identifying a pre-approved bench of vendors or select only one team?*

   The Transportation Authority expects to contract between 3 and 5 consulting firms for the pre-approved bench.

5. *Can you let us know about the translation services needed – written documents?*

   We are seeking consultant support to translate surveys, Town Hall presentation decks, one-pagers (flyers/handouts) and other collateral that will be used for outreach. The three (3)

languages that the Communications Division regularly request translations for are Chinese, Spanish and Filipino; Russian and Korean can be considered.

The Transportation Authority's multilingual materials are guided by the City and County of San Francisco that recommend suggested (threshold) languages for the 11 supervisorial districts. We reference their dashboard, [San Francisco language diversity data](#), that shows language data from the United States Census Bureau.

6. *Are there any California business license requirements for this procurement?*

   There is not a California business license requirement for this procurement.

7. *Is this a renewal of an existing contract?*

   No, RFQ 24/25-06 On-Call Strategic Communications, Media and Community Professional Services is a procurement for a new on-call strategic communications bench.

8. *Can you please share a link where the presentation and the participant list will be posted?*

   A link to RFQ 24/25-06 On-Call Strategic Communications, Media and Community Professional Services can be found [here](#).

9. *Are there any preferences for local firms?*

   There is not a preference for local firms. However, certain informal requests for proposals may require a local business enterprise goal or a disadvantage business enterprise goal or small business enterprise goal.

10. *What are the primary languages a consultant would support besides English and Spanish?*

    See response to question 5.

11. *Will this procurement require any video production, post production, and or broadcast services?*

    Areas of Expertise #12. on page 6 of RFQ 24/25-06 lists "Photography/Videography." Video and broadcasting productions for outreach, promotion and /or archival work may be requested. Should these skillset(s) be within your firm's area(s) of expertise, please list.

12. *What is the relationship between SFCTA's in-house graphic designer and vendor graphic design efforts?*

The Transportation Authority currently has one (1) Senior Graphic Designer and one (1) existing 3rd party vendor for website development. The graphic design team may request for on-call support; in some cases, the Graphic Design team may need coverage and support for graphic design work using the Adobe Creative Suite (InDesign, Photoshop, and Illustrator).

13. *Do you prefer a Northern California team or is SFCTA open to an Los Angeles-based firm with satellite office in Northern California?*

The Transportation Authority is open to all firms.

14. *Can you please give me more information on the Event planning needed as part of the RFQ?*

The Communications Division may request for support with some (all) event planning logistics. This can include researching, negotiating, providing, supporting (but not limited to):
- **Equipment** (e.g. podium, stage, tables, chairs)
- **Sound** (e.g. mic(s), speaker(s), DJ services, sound booth)
- **Event planning / Operations / Logistics** (e.g. researching / booking venue space, managing the RSVP's, creating event link(s), staffing and running the event such as staffing the registration table, hosting Q&A, moderating group work / roundtable / discussion).

15. *Could you describe the level of demand for on the ground outreach support, as in multilingual in-person support with conversations directly with San Francsico business owners and residents?*

Depending on the project's outreach needs, consultants may be asked to conduct outreach directly with the various mono/multilingual audiences / community / neighborhoods / groups / businesses. This can include, but not limited to distributing (in-language) materials (e.g. one-pagers, flyers, handouts), hosting merchant walks, and /or attending and staffing CBO and community meetings on behalf of the Transportation Authority.

16. *In the RFQ under details of Scope, 4. Branding, messaging, Images, are you suggesting potential updates to some aspects of the overall brand?*

As of this writing, we are not anticipating rebranding our agency logo. We are, however always seeking strategies to improve and maximize efficiency and equity of our messaging as it relates to branding.

17. *Do you prefer proposals from teams that can handle all of the area in the scope, or would you consider proposals that only cover one of a few areas?*

Proposals covering all or part of the scope will be considered for the on-call communications bench.

18. *Regarding online and/or technology engagement/outreach tools, is the SFCTA expecting a consultant to provide technical programming in addition to design services?*

    The Transportation Authority's in-house graphic design team also oversees and manages the agency's technical programming team to develop code, user interfaces and user experience. Consultants may be asked to assist the technical programming team including providing fill-in coverage for the graphic design team's out-of-office and /or extended periods of leave.

19. *Could media buying be a part of the services requested?*

    Media buys have been a part of neighborhood and citywide outreach; this includes securing media buys with tv, radio and print. We have also utilized media buys for social media (e.g. Facebook ads). Consultants may be asked to assist in the research, negotiation and the securing of media buys at the local, regional and / or national level.

20. *What agency projects is the SFCTA expecting or anticipating support on during the initial three-year contract period?*

    As of this writing, the Transportation Authority is planning for or has already begun outreach on several projects and studies that will continue in the form of new task orders under the new on-call strategic communications, media and community professional services bench. The active outreach previously mentioned includes outreach at the neighborhood and / or city-wide level. For more information on active and planned outreach, please visit https://www.sfcta.org/projects.

21. *Is the RFQ out?*

    RFQ 24/25-06 On-Call Strategic Communications, Media and Community Professional Services was issued on April 18, 2025 and can be found here or on the Transportation Authority's website.

22. *Is there an incumbent?*

    Yes, the Transportation Authority has consulting firms providing on-call communication, media and community professional services on a separate, expiring five-year contract.

23. *What is the website to find the RFQ?*

Please see response to question #8.

24. *If we are submitting a statement of qualification for all of the service areas that we cover but don't cover an area like Event Planning, how should we adjust our budget?*

A cost proposal must include a budget comprised of a matrix with columns for hourly rate, classification and name of all personnel and/or sub-consultant. A respondent without event planning expertise can provide a subconsultant specializing in event planning with their associated hourly rates, classifications, and name of all personnel.

25. *Is there an estimate of percent of budget for each area of service?*

No, there is not an estimated budget for each area of service. A budget will depend on the scope of work requested in an informal request for proposals issued to the on-call bench.

26. *Can a blended rate be provided?*

Please see response to question #24.

The Transportation Authority received the following questions in italics submitted by 5:00 p.m. on April 29, 2025.

27. *If a prime or subcontractor that has a lobbying arm were to be awarded the contract, would the firm be disqualified from lobbying the agency on behalf of other clients?*

The prime or subcontractor would not be disqualified from work with the Transportation Authority, unless there was a conflict of interest with Transportation Authority-related work.

28. *Page 10 of the RFQ states that there is a 10-page limit to the hypothetical responses, but page 13 indicates that there is a 4-page limit for this section. Does the 10-page limit refer to the entire Technical and Management Approach section of our RFQ response, or is there another way we should interpret these different page limits?*

The hypothetical scenario has a 4-page maximum. The 10-page maximum shown on page 10 of the RFQ was an error and an addendum will be issued.

29. *Our firm specializes in several of the areas outlined in the RFQ but does not provide public relations and crisis communications services. Given the statement in the RFQ that preference will be given to teams covering all expertise areas, could you clarify how scoring will be*

impacted for specialized firms that do not cover certain areas, such as PR or crisis communications?

Scoring for Capabilities and Experience as noted in SECTION VI – EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHOD OF AWARD will be 35 points and is based on a "Capability of project team, specific relevant experience, qualifications, and expertise of each firm and subconsultant firm, especially the proposed key personnel…"

Section IV – Scope of Services under Areas of Expertise states "The Agencies will favorably consider firms/teams that have capabilities in all areas of expertise, but specialized firms/teams may also submit responses for one or more areas of expertise that match the firm/team's capabilities. Firms/teams must declare which of these areas of expertise they are qualified to support."

Please include in your submission which of the 14 communication and outreach areas your firm specializes in.

30. *Would the Agency prefer specialized firms to focus solely on their specific areas of expertise, or would it be more advantageous to assemble a comprehensive team of consulting firms covering all 14 service areas listed?*

    Please specify which areas of expertise your firm provides, then note which areas of expertise fall under your subconsultants.

31. *Given the requirement to include a detailed approach for all 14 service areas within the 10-page limit, the current page constraint presents a significant challenge. Would the Agency consider extending the page limit to approximately 25 pages to adequately address each service area in the proposal?*

    The requirement to include a detailed approach for all 14 services is not constrained by a 10-page limit. The page limit for submitted statements of qualifications will remain at 20 pages.

32. *The proposal requires that SOQs discuss the level of effort with hours allocated by task for all key team members, including their expected availability and percentage of time dedicated to the Agencies' contracts. Considering the as-needed nature of these services, could you provide guidance on how the Agency expects proposers to effectively present the "hours by task" component?*

    "Hours by task" for the as-need nature of these services can be based on assumption or assumed hours.

33. *Regarding the hypothetical scenario provided, it mentions including agency staff time as acceptable. Could the Agency clarify which types of services or tasks would be appropriate or acceptable for agency staff to support or lead?*

   It can be assumed that the Agency is (but not limited to) the lead on some or all of the 14 areas of expertise.

34. *How will SFCTA and TIMMA select and award work to firms on the bench? Will it be a competitive process, by task order? Or could a single firm from the bench be selected based on scope needed and qualifications required for the scope?*

   Task order awards will be based on a competitive informal request for proposals process. However, if a project requires highly specialized skills unique to a firm, a specialist firm may be selected for the task order.

35. *Are selected firms precluded from other work with SFCTA if they are selected for this contract?*

   A selected firm would not be precluded from other work with SFCTA, unless there was a conflict of interest.

For more information regarding the RFQ, visit the Transportation Authority's website:
www.sfcta.org/contracting