

STATE OF WASHINGTON
Washington Student Achievement Council

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

RFP NO. 21-RFP046

ADDENDUM

The following are answers to questions received about RFP No. 21-RFP046 as of July 23, 2019.

- 1) Can a media buying firm located outside the State of WA who is just recently licensed to do business in the State of WA and has done similar, successful campaigns in another state qualified if we do not hold a place of business in Washington but are able to buy from outside the state?

The minimum qualifications set forth in section 1.3 of the proposal do not require the bidder to be located in Washington State, only that they are licensed to perform work in Washington State, be insured to the extent of state law, and be registered with the Statewide Vendor System.

The AGENCY also recommends bidders review section 3.3, subsection B.2. of the RFP, where the criteria for scoring is detailed. Specific experience and work done for Washington State entities, and familiarity and relationships with local media within Washington State are mentioned as factors that may impact scoring of your proposal.

- 2) Under the scope of work, it states Bidder will: "Receive and pay invoices for up to 10 advertising outlets whose agreements exceed \$10,000. These advertising agreements and distribution of ads will be handled by WA529". Does this mean AGENCY will negotiate rates and with Television stations for example? TV media buys would most likely be over 10K. Does this also mean no agency commission (provided by the station) will be granted to the Bidder? Will AGENCY receive the commission or pay full gross, even though the Bidder would normally build the buy, provide reach and frequency numbers along with demographic impressions, etc?

This line is not referring to the radio, TV, OTT or digital vehicles described in the other bullets in section 1.2. This refers to selected advertising agreements, primarily print or digital, that will be negotiated and fulfilled entirely by WA529. All the contractor is expected to do is pay the invoice, as is, with no commission or markup.

- 3) AGENCY will "Provide approved invoices to be paid for up to 10 select vendors for whom agreements exceed \$10,000." Does this mean Bidder will be expected to pay these invoices on behalf of the AGENCY without mark-up or commission?

Yes. The CONTRACTOR will be expected to pay these on behalf of WA529.

- 4) Will Bidder be responsible for any print? If not, will the cost of print placement be part of the proposed budget?

Contractor will not be responsible for negotiating or placement of any print media. Only paying selected invoices on behalf of WA529. This cost is part of the proposed budget.

5) Are all media expenditures expected to be net?

All media expenditures are to be net cost.

6) May companies from outside the USA apply?

Minimum bidder qualifications can be found in section 1.3 of the RFP (minimum qualifications). Note that a bidder must be licensed to do business in the State of Washington or provide commitment that it will become licensed within 30 days of being selected as the Apparent Successful Bidder.

7) Does the contractor need to come to Olympia, WA for meetings?

Bidders are not required to come to Olympia, WA during the bidding process. AGENCY may require interviews with bidders chosen as finalists. These meetings may take place via video web meeting, if necessary, and if approved by the AGENCY. If the AGENCY awards a contract as a result of this RFP, specific meetings referenced in the Section 1.2 will be on-site at the AGENCY offices. The AGENCY will require that the CONTRACTOR be available to attend such meetings in-person. There will likely be additional consultation required, and such consultations may be by a mutually agreed upon channel, as long as that channel meets the needs of the AGENCY.

8) May the contractor perform the work from outside the US?

Except for the specific meetings referenced in the Scope of Work (Section 1.2), the AGENCY does not specifically require that the tasks be performed in the U.S. However, the AGENCY recommends bidders review section 3.3, subsection B.2. of the RFP, where the criteria for scoring is detailed. Specific experience and work done for Washington State entities, and familiarity and relationships with local media within Washington State are mentioned as factors that may impact scoring of your proposal.

9) Can bidders submit proposals via email?

Yes, proposals will be accepted electronically (i.e. via email) or by mail. Please see Section 2.3 of the RFP.

10) Social Media is mentioned on page 3, Sec1.2, par.1 as being part of the Scope of Work. However no mention of Social Media is included in the Est. Media Spend on page 17. In the past Social Media was handled internally by the WCSP-GET team. Please clarify how Social Media Marketing will be handled...by who and under what budget?

Most of AGENCY's paid social media outreach will be Facebook boosted posts and will be handled direct. If we elect to use the Contractor's services for any additional paid social, the expenditure will be included in "Other Tactics" as noted in the chart on page 17 of the RFP.

11) On the Est. Media Spend list on page 17, 'Other Tactics' have a budget of \$0 - \$100K. Will eMail Marketing fall in this category as well as any newer digital tracking/attribution capabilities?

"Other Tactics" may include email marketing campaigns and any digital strategies not otherwise noted in the Est. Media Spend chart on page 17 of the RFP.

12) The Est. Media Spend page 17, Paid Search / Web Display / Pay per Click has a projected spend of \$50K - \$75K. Please confirm that this includes the Digital Management and Digital Spend?

Digital management fees are included in the \$65,000 annual contractor compensation figure noted in section 1.4 of the RFP. The \$50,000 - \$75,000 projected expenditure for paid search / web display / pay per click is media spend only.

- 13) PG 17: In the Estimated Media Spend table the media dollars are listed in NET. Can you clarify if this indicates for the Media Buyer to not assume the standard agency commission?

All media expenditures are net, and do not include agency commission. As stated in section 1.4, buyer compensation is fixed at \$65,000 per state fiscal year.

- 14) PG 16: 3.4 section states: "The maximum contractor fee included for the two year period, inclusive of any fees payable to any subcontractors (if applicable) must be no more than \$130,000 (no more than \$65,000 per State Fiscal Year)." Is the intention for this \$65K inclusive of the agency commissions?

The \$65,000 buyer compensation is in lieu of standard commission. AGENCY pays net.

- 15) Can you clarify if you want our proposal recommendation to include specific media selections detailed with rates? If so, can you share more detailed information about the campaign key performance indicators (KPIs), target audience (specific demo) and creative specs (i.e. (:15) vs (:30) spots, etc.).

AGENCY does not expect a detailed media proposal including current rates at this time. AGENCY seeks the Bidder's recommendation on media mix and spending level, based on the Bidder's experience buying TV, Radio & digital media in the market, and its knowledge of WA529 and the GET and DreamAhead programs. Please see section 3.4.A of the RFP.

- 16) Please describe the current list of creative assets that WSAC plans to make available for this campaign: TV / video spots, audio spots, digital graphics, print ads, outdoor / environmental media, etc. Please describe length, variants and specifications where possible.

AGENCY has produced / will produce creative assets for this campaign, either in-house or under separate agreement with a creative agency. If further creative assets or production assistance is needed, AGENCY will release an RFP for those services.

- 17) Is WSAC open to, or seeking, creative production of advertising from the selected contractor? If resizing or editing of any ads is called for given media placements, will budget be made available for the contractor to provide these edits or will WSAC complete in-house?

Should any alternate ad sizes or spot lengths be needed, AGENCY will either perform the necessary edits in-house, or procure the services of a creative agency or production house under a separate agreement.

- 18) Does WSAC have any specific, measurable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that you have setup in the promotion of GET and DreamAhead? Anything you have used to measure success historically or new metrics you are working to achieve as part of this campaign?

The demographic targeted for this campaign is Adults 18-64, parents or grandparents of young children, with annual household income of at least \$75,000. New account growth, GET units purchased, and increased participation in DreamAhead are the primary measurements of success.

19) Is there an existing campaign plan you have developed outlining comprehensive strategy to promote GET and DreamAhead?

Please see the chart outlining Estimated Media Spend on page 17 of the RFP for approximate timing and key markets targeted for the campaign.

20) For the purpose of informing our proposed approach, is WSAC willing to provide any further detail about specific audience research that has been conducted or gathered to date? We would request any research data be released along with answers to this Q&A period.

No recent formal market research that would inform strategic decisions for this campaign is available.

21) Will there be any preference shown to incumbents who developed creative advertising assets for this campaign or prior media buyers WSAC has worked with? Please describe vendors who produced existing campaign creative.

This RFP is open to any qualified bidder that meets the minimum qualifications stated in section 1.3. Absolutely no preference is given to former or incumbent contractors. Bidders should consider that section 3.3, subsection B.2. of the RFP states that specific experience and work done for Washington State entities, and familiarity and relationships with local media within Washington State are mentioned as factors that may impact scoring of your proposal.

22) Please describe who will be on the selection committee for this RFP by names and roles within the agency.

All qualified bids will be evaluated by:

- Lucas Minor, Director – WA529
- Rodger O'Connor, Associate Director for Marketing & Communications – WA529
- Daniel Payne, Marketing Specialist – WA529
- Katie Gross, Marketing Specialist – WA529
- Vince Meyer, Marketing Coordinator – WA529

23) What is the name of the agency or media organization you most recently partnered with to do the media buying?

Sunrise Media most recently performed media buying services for WA529.

24) In the proposal, there is a request for search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM) services. SEO is a hard labor cost and would require us to know the scope of the project to best bid the work. Are there further insights you can share about the SEO and SEM requirements?

As a stand-alone service, search engine optimization will not be required. Some site optimization may be required if it is in the course of a paid search engine marketing (SEM) campaign.

25) Is the SEO and SEM to be taken from the media budget or buyer compensation?

For the scope of expected search engine marketing tactics, please see row 7 of the Estimated Media Spend chart on page 17 of the RFP. Any additional SEM or internet marketing tactics would fall under "Other Tactics" (row 9). The media budget is inclusive of media spend only. Any fees for SEM services performed must fall within the buyer Compensation for services.

26) Can you please explain the timing of the media. There are parts of the RFP that say the media will run October - November and April -May, but on the estimated media spend, January and February are included with Cable TV, OTT and streaming audio. Should we develop our technical proposal based on the Oct/Nov and April/ May, or also include Jan / Feb?

Broadcast TV and Radio will only run October/November and April/May. Other TV (OTT, cable) and radio (streaming apps) should continue to run in the in-between months.

27) After initial RFP is approved and executed, is there flexibility for adjusting investment to tactics based on performance and recommendations?

Yes. AGENCY recognizes that any strategies submitted as part of the RFP process may be adjusted based on detailed meetings with the AGENCY after the contract is awarded.

28) While there is specific budget assigned to traditional marketing, if research/data presents the target audience is more accessible through digital tactics (example: radio vs. digital audio), would there be of consideration for adjusting budgets?

Yes. The AGENCY seeks the Bidder's recommendation on media mix and spending level, based on the Bidder's experience buying TV, radio & digital media in the market, and its knowledge of WA529 and the GET and DreamAhead programs. Please see section 3.4.A of the RFP.

29) Do you have successes from previous campaigns that you can share and that can be expanded upon?

No. The AGENCY prefers not to comment on the success or failure of previous campaigns or contractors. We ask that bidders respond to the RFP based on your own experience and successes.

30) Is the campaign goal awareness or conversions? If it is both, are there specific metrics for those goals, based in your historical campaign ROI levels?

Awareness and conversions are both goals of the campaign, and can vary by media tactic. Broadcast TV and radio are more suited to driving awareness, while digital tactics such as SEO are better suited towards driving conversions. New account growth, GET units purchased, and increased participation in DreamAhead are the primary measurements of success. Of course, increased awareness of Washington's College Savings plans will help drive these metrics.

31) Can we review and evaluate historical plans/results, to help inform the recommendation we put together for you? (Since historical success/failure specific to a brand/product is one of the best predictors of future success, those who have previously done work for you have that information, and it can make a big difference in our media decision process.)

No. The AGENCY prefers not to comment on the success or failure of previous campaigns or contractors. We ask that bidders respond to the RFP based on your own experience and successes.

- 32) Are there defined target segments and timing windows identified and prioritized as “best performers” for you that we should consider when looking to allocate dollars?

The demographic targeted for this campaign is Adults 18-64, parents or grandparents of young children, with annual household income of at least \$75,000. Please see the chart outlining Estimated Media Spend on page 17 of the RFP for approximate timing and key markets targeted for the campaign.

- 33) Do hard costs to the media agency needed to deliver quality work (such as digital tools, Nielsen ratings books, etc.) need to come out of the max agency fee amount stated in the RFP, or can there be a line item for that in the budget, in addition to agency fees?

The AGENCY considers such items as “cost of doing business”. No additional budget or line items will be provided for work tools.

- 34) Will you be taking into consideration agency fees as well as impressions/CPM delivery when evaluating proposals (since it is a cumulative cost/delivery/ROI on the total budget)?

Yes. Proposals will be scored on the whole, taking into account efficiency of the media buy, and proposed buyer compensation. Please see section 3.4 of the RFP, where scoring of the bidder’s Cost Proposal is outlined.