

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MARKET RESEARCH**

**ISSUE DATE:
November 9, 2019**

**E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS TO:
jhowe@mccs.me.edu**

SUMMARY

The Maine Community College System (MCCS) and the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce seeks to enter into a three-year (with the possibility of two one-year extensions) contract with a market research firm to conduct market research initiatives on an as needed basis. The contract will be between the vendor and the System Office, located in Augusta, and/or one of its colleges or centers. MCCS will have unlimited usage rights to all data produced under this contract.

- Our immediate project for Remote Work for ME seeks employer research on employer experiences of remote and hybrid work, ongoing implementation of remote work, the skill and training needs of employees and supervisors as well as guidance the business could have benefited from. The selected firm will compile a report of these findings to inform and support development of a remote worker training program.
- Future projects will involve similar work and may surround rural healthcare initiatives or other work force sector specific research. They will be similar in scope of work but undefined at this time.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

The MCCS is Maine's comprehensive two-year college system offering nearly 300 career and transfer programs, continuing education and customized training for business and industry.

Additional information about the institutions within the MCCS can be found at:

Maine Community College System (Augusta): mccs.me.edu

Central Maine Community College (Auburn): cmcc.edu

Eastern Maine Community College (Bangor): emcc.edu

Kennebec Valley Community College (Fairfield and Hinckley): kvcc.me.edu

Northern Maine Community College (Presque Isle): nmcc.edu

Southern Maine Community College (South Portland and Brunswick): smccme.edu

Washington County Community College (Calais): wccc.me.edu

York County Community College (Wells): yccc.edu

The Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce is the workforce training arm of the Maine Community College system and delivers programs through its seven campuses statewide, remotely and employer worksites.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Remote Work for ME employer research shall include

- Employer focus group with up to 15 employers on perceptions, experience and needs regarding remote and hybrid employment. This will include the skill, competencies and training needs of employees to be effective remote workers, and the competencies required of front-line supervisors in the management and coordination of remote / hybrid teams. It will also include information on the guidance the business did / could have benefited from in transitioning to remote/ hybrid work.
- Survey of employers regarding the use of remote employment, attitudes and adjustment to remote and hybrid work.
- Synthesize the research, focus groups, field survey, into a final report to be shared first with the Harold Alfond Center for the Advancement of Maine's Workforce leadership and the Maine Advisory Council on Remote Work (MACRW). The report will be designed to provide clear insight into the skills, competencies and administrative supports which workers require and which businesses benefitted from or require(d) to make the transition to supporting a remote and hybrid workforce. The findings will inform and support development of remote worker and leading remote/hybrid teams supervisor training programs.
- Work must begin December 2021 and conclude by January 15, 2021

Future projects shall include similar employer research.

QUALIFICATIONS

The selected individual or firm shall have the following qualifications:

1. Experience conducting similar types of market research projects.
2. Experience working in and knowledge of Maine.
3. Strong interpersonal and communication skills;
4. Individuals or firms that wish to be considered for this project should submit a letter indicating interest and the ability to start work immediately. Consultants have an obligation to disclose any situation of actual or potential conflict that impacts their capacity to serve the best interest of the Maine Community College System, or that may reasonably be perceived as having this effect. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification or the termination of the Contract.

RFP SCHEDULE

RFP Schedule	Date
RFP issued	November 9, 2021
Deadline for Questions	November 15, 2021
Response to Questions	November 17, 2021
RFP due back	November 29, 2021 12:00 PM
Winner selected and notified	December 3, 2021 By End of Business Day

Please submit questions by email to jhowe@mccs.me.edu. Questions will not be accepted by telephone. MCCS will make every effort to answer questions submitted by bidders to the best of our ability by the due date. We strongly encourage bidders to submit questions as early in the RFP process as possible. Response to questions will be posted on the RFP page on the date specified above.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION

The following must be included in the submission:

- a) A statement of qualifications;
- b) A list of previous market research studies;
- c) A schedule of fees; These should be specific to the Remote Work for ME initiative
- d) If a firm, a description of key personnel to be involved in the project;
- e) Confirmation that work can be started and complete per the timelines listed in the scope of work
- f) A list of three references from past clients for work performed within the last three years.

Firms may provide a proposal for the Remote Work for ME initiative. Schedule of fees must be separated by the scope of work pieces of the Remote Work for ME initiative.

The firm selected for this project will be required to show evidence of, and maintain through the completion of the project, all required insurance.

All responses should be addressed to: Joshua Howe, jhowe@mccs.me.edu

Review of qualifications will begin immediately and remain open until a market researcher for these projects are identified.

NOTICE TO VENDORS AND BIDDERS:

STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL MCCS CONTRACTS

The following standard contracting terms and conditions are incorporated and shall become a part of any final contract that will be awarded by any college or other operating unit of the Maine Community College System (collectively "MCCS"). These terms and conditions derive from the public nature and limited resources of the MCCS. MCCS DOES NOT AGREE TO:

1. Provide any defense, hold harmless or indemnity;
2. Waive any statutory or constitutional immunity;
3. Apply the law of a state other than Maine;
4. Procure types or amounts of insurance beyond those MCCS already maintains or waive any rights of subrogation;
5. Add any entity as an additional insured to MCCS policies of insurance;
6. Pay attorneys' fees; costs, including collection costs; expenses or liquidated damages;
7. Promise confidentiality in a manner contrary to Maine's Freedom of Access Act;
8. Permit an entity to change unilaterally any term or condition once the contract is signed;
9. Automatic renewals for term(s) greater than month-to-month;
10. Limitations on MCCS' recovery of lawful damages incurred as a result of breach of the contract;
11. Limitation of the time period under which claims can be made or actions brought arising from the contract;
12. Vendor's terms prevailing over MCCS' standard terms and conditions, including addenda; and
13. Unilateral modifications to the contract by the vendor.

BY SUBMITTING A RESPONSE TO A REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL, BID OR OTHER OFFER TO DO BUSINESS WITH MCCS, YOUR ENTITY UNDERSTANDS AND AGREES THAT:

1. The above standard terms and conditions are thereby incorporated into any agreement entered into between MCCS and your entity; that such terms and condition shall control in the event of any conflict with such agreement; and that your entity will not propose or demand any contrary terms;
2. The above standard terms and conditions will govern the interpretation of such agreement notwithstanding the expression of any other term and/or condition to the contrary;
3. Your entity will not propose to any college or other operating unit of the MCCS any contractual documents of any kind that are not in at least 11-point black font on a white background and completely contained in one Word or PDF document, and that any references to terms and conditions, privacy policies or any other conditions referenced outside of the contract will not apply; and
4. Your entity will identify at the time of submission which, if any, portion or your submitted materials are entitled to "trade secret" exemption from disclosure under Maine's Freedom of Access Act; that failure to so identify will authorize MCCS to conclude that no portions are so exempt; and that your entity will defend, indemnify and hold harmless MCCS in any and all legal actions that seek to compel MCCS to disclose under Maine's Freedom of Access Act some or all of your submitted materials and/or contract, if any, executed between MCCS and your entity