



VENDOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question 1:

Sect 2.3 Term of Contract (page 8) – Wording says the contract is for two years, but dates are only one year.

Answer 1:

The term of the contract is two (2) years.

Question 2:

Section 4.1.2 Expertise – Item b) requests examples of reports and analysis (generally confidential info) and analysis, but specs are only for field and tab? Will we need this?

Answer 2:

If a Vendor is applying to either a) fulfill the data analysis consultant requirements; or b) fulfill the requirements of *both* data analysis consultant *and* the quantitative data provider requirements, then the Vendor should submit at least two (2) examples of finished work products (for example, reports, white papers, or data analysis summaries). If the Vendor is applying to fulfill *only* the requirements of the quantitative data provider, then the Vendor should provide a narrative explaining the type of data fields that were provided to the data's final user for its own report creation.

Question 3:

Sec 4.1.1 Company Financial, Insurance and Security Information -- CN asks for audited financials for 3 years. Do these need to be submitted with proposal on Dec 8, or are these the types of documents that you will request only from the successful offeror as described in Sec 3.3.7 Request for Documents Notice?

Answer 3:

Yes, the financial, insurance, and security information needs to be submitted with the proposal.

Question 4:

You are asking for an hourly rate and how many hours will be worked during a given week. Normally we have supplied total cost for a project. Would we need to break down total project cost by a period of time within which to complete a particular project or would just giving total cost with specific labor rates within total cost be acceptable?

Answer 4:

Services in both Section 6.3.1 and Section 6.3.2 will be awarded on a firm fixed cost basis to include both one residential survey and one business survey so it is acceptable to provide total cost with specific labor rates within the total cost. If your proposal includes providing services in both sections 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, please provide a separate quote for each section. If the respondent is willing to contribute any services in-kind to be used as a match on Connected Nation's federal grants, please indicate the hours to be contributed in your cost proposal. For example, some of our current vendors contribute one hour for each hour for which they are compensated. In-kind contributions, however, are not required nor are they a condition for award.

Question 5:

RFP states prevailing wage. Is this based upon government regulations of prevailing wage for all labor classes within a given geographical area on government contracts or actual prevailing wage w/o government mandates?

Answer 5:

All of the language in the Terms and Conditions for Contracts and Grants using ARRA Funds is standard language that is included in our contracts to ensure compliance with federal guidelines. In Section 2.6 of the RFP, it states, "Much of the language included in the Standard Terms and Conditions for Contracts and Grants using ARRA Funds and the Vendor Contract reflects requirements of state and federal law. Although some requirements in Appendix C may not be applicable to the Vendor awarded this Contract, CN reserves the right to enforce any such provision if NTIA rules that subcontractors are subject to every term and condition required for receipt of ARRA funds."

Question 6:

In section 6.3.1, bullet point 8, about residential quotas, refers to "country" of residence. I believe this should read as "county" of residence. Urban and rural area definitions within a state are based on counties.

Answer 6:

Correct. That is a mistake in drafting.

Question 7:

Section 6.3.2 is the portion of the RFP that lines up well with my company's expertise and previous work I have done for CN and other clients. My proposal will only cover this set of requirements. If desired, I could submit a proposal including requirements of 6.3.1, although I would need to outsource and coordinate this part of the project with a third party vendor.

Answer 7:

Connected Nation, Inc. (CN) is seeking experienced Market Research Vendor(s) to fulfill the requirements of a quantitative data provider (as set forth in section 6.3.1) and a data analysis consultant (as set forth in section 6.3.2). A Vendor must be able to fulfill the requirements of *at least one* of those roles. A Vendor may choose to submit a proposal to fulfill the requirements of only one role (quantitative data provider *or* data analysis consultant) or the Vendor may submit a proposal to fulfill the requirements of both roles (quantitative data provider *and* data analysis consultant). If a Vendor submits a proposal to fulfill both roles, Connected Nation reserves the right to accept the proposal for only one of the two roles.

Question 8:

The question I have regarding 6.3.2 is whether or not the requirements set forth within 6.3.2 include or exclude work related to coding or categorization of open end text responses as part of the data processing step laid out in bullet 5. This can be rather labor intensive and therefore can have a significant impact on the proposal costs. If this is not something that can be answered right now, due to the passed deadline, or for another reason, I will break out these costs as a line item that can be included or omitted from the final contract, at the discretion of CN.

Answer 8:

Section 6.3.2 reads: "After surveys have been conducted, process data (including weighting of survey respondents to match the latest federal statistics based on age and gender, and verifying the integrity of data collected by Quantitative Data Provider) and prepare SPSS data file and WinCross job files to CN for further analysis." One part of the preparation of the SPSS data file is to include the categorization of open-end text responses.

Question 9:

Can the errors & omissions professional liability insurance requirement be waived for certified small and/or woman-owned businesses, or is this an absolute requirement?

Answer 9:

Connected Nation cannot waive the insurance requirements.

Question 10:

Do the business surveys also require an option to be conducted in Spanish?

Answer 10:

The business and the residential surveys may be required to be conducted in both English and Spanish.

Question 11:

Do you have a draft household respondent and business respondent questionnaire that can be released to the bidders?

Answer 11:

There is not currently a draft of a questionnaire that is available for public release, but the business and residential surveys will be similar in format to the Residential and Business Technology Assessments that Connected Nation has used in the past to produce the reports that can be found at the following websites:

Ohio - http://www.connectohio.org/mapping_and_research/

Tennessee - http://www.connectedtennessee.org/research/tennessee_technology_trends_2009.php

Question 12:

How many total questions will be in the survey? How many will be open-end/essay type questions? How many will be closed-end (i.e. yes/no, multiple choice) type questions?

Answer 12:

The residential survey will consist of a matrix of approximately fifty-eight (58) questions in total, including an estimated fourteen (14) questions that identify the demographic status of the respondent, including (but not limited to) age, income, and race/ethnicity. The business survey will consist of a matrix of approximately thirty-eight (38) questions in total, including an estimated eleven (11) questions related to business size and sector.

The residential survey will consist of a matrix of approximately thirty-six (36) multiple-choice questions. Approximately twelve (12) of the thirty-six (36) multiple-choice questions have an open-ended component in the form of an "Other" option that will need to be specified by the

respondent, recorded by the quantitative data provider, and coded by the data analysis consultant. In addition, the residential survey matrix includes an estimated nineteen (19) yes/no questions, and an estimated three (3) matrix/rating scale questions.

The business survey will consist of a matrix of approximately twenty-two (22) multiple-choice questions, of which an estimated ten (10) have an open-ended component in the form of an “Other” option that will need to be specified by the respondent, recorded by the quantitative data provider, and coded by the data analysis consultant. In addition, the business survey matrix includes an estimated twelve (12) yes/no questions, one (1) open-ended question, and three (3) matrix/rating questions.

The number of questions posed to any individual respondent in either the business or residential survey will be dependent upon the respondent’s current technology adoption level, so no respondent will be asked every question. For example, if resident X does not subscribe to home broadband service, then s/he would not be asked follow-up questions about how much s/he pays per month, satisfaction levels with current broadband service, etc.

Question 13:

What would the length of the telephone survey be for the household respondents and business respondents? How long do you expect the survey respondents to be on the telephone?

Answer 13:

The number of questions posed to any individual respondent in either the business or residential survey will be dependent upon the respondent’s current technology adoption level, so no respondent will be asked every question. For example, if resident X does not subscribe to home broadband service, then s/he would not be asked follow-up questions about how much s/he pays per month, satisfaction levels with current broadband service, etc. Historically, similar residential surveys conducted for Connected Nation have averaged between ten and twelve minutes, while similar business surveys have averaged between nine and ten minutes.

Question 14:

How many completes are you looking for in each state from the 2,000 total business and household respondents?

Answer 14:

In each of the thirteen (13) states, the quantitative data provider will be required to provide 1,200 residential completes for each residential survey wave and 800 business completes for each business survey wave.

Question 15:

What is the significance of the 13 states that you are selecting for surveying and could you provide the vendors with a list of the selected states?

Answer 15:

In August 2009, Connected Nation applied to the NTIA in the U.S. Department of Commerce from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and the Broadband Data Improvement Act (BDIA) to map the availability of residential broadband service for eight State Broadband Data and Development Grants (SBDD) as the Designated Entity for those specific states. In addition to the eight grants applied for, CN assisted with SBDD grant application in five other states as either a sub-grantee or a sub-contractor. The twelve (12) states and Puerto Rico are the states in which Connected Nation has applied for SBDD grants as either the Designated Entity or as a sub-grantee/sub-contractor. The quantitative data provider will be conducting residential and business surveys in these twelve (12) states, plus Puerto Rico. The twelve (12) states in which the quantitative data provider will be conducting residential and business surveys (in addition to Puerto Rico) are as follows: Alaska, Florida, Iowa, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

Question 16:

Is the respondent that you are reaching out to the person who pays for the broadband service or the person who uses the service the most?

Answer 16:

In our residential surveys, we intend to reach the adult head of household, regardless of whether that individual uses broadband technology, and regardless of whether the household subscribes to home broadband service. In our business surveys, we seek to speak with the employee at the establishment who is most familiar with the business's current technology adoption and usage.

Question 17:

How does this research coincide with the research that the FCC is doing regarding expanding broadband service to rural and underserved populations?

Answer 17:

These surveys are not affiliated with any ongoing research being conducted by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), nor are they funded by the FCC.

Question 18:

Are there demographic percentages available to meet the quotas of the survey?

Answer 18:

For the residential surveys, the demographic percentages will be based on age (brackets=18-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, and 65+), gender, and county of residence (urban-rural classification), with target percentages based on the most recent US Census population estimates for each state.

Question 19:

You mention about this being an RDD (Random Digit Dial) study, are there a particular type(s) of business or population segment(s), that you are trying to reach?

Answer 19:

The purpose of these surveys is to determine current awareness about available broadband availability in each state among the population as a whole. As such, our goal is to collect data from a broad selection of respondents in each state, hence the quotas.

Question 20:

How many survey sessions do you want to occur during the two year time period of the contract?

Answer 20:

For the contract period, there will be two (2) residential survey sessions (currently scheduled to be conducted in Q1 2010 and Q1 2011), and two (2) business survey sessions (currently scheduled to be conducted in Q3 2010 and Q3 2011), for a total of four survey sessions.

Question 21:

Is the total number of 2,000 completed residential (1,200) and business (800) surveys listed in the RFP the total for each wave or for the entire contract?

Answer 21:

For each residential wave (Q1 2010 and Q1 2011) the quantitative data provider will complete 1,200 residential surveys in each of the twelve (12) states plus Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately 15,600 residential completes for each residential wave. For each business survey wave (Q3 2010 and Q3 2011) the quantitative data provider will complete approximately 800 business surveys in each of the twelve (12) states plus Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately 10,400 business completes in each business wave.

Question 22:

Please clarify the outcome of the survey that you are looking for, is it what areas need service or need help with the cost of the service or some other factors?

Answer 22:

The residential and business surveys will be used to measure the accuracy and validity of broadband availability data as part of the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. The surveys are also intended to trend residential and business technology adoption, usage, and demand, as well as barriers to technology adoption, among residents and businesses at a state level.

As such, the outcome of the survey should be to establish a benchmark and measure growth trends in the following three areas: 1) what percentage of residents/businesses subscribe to broadband service or are aware that broadband service is available at their location, 2) what percentage of residents/businesses are using computers and/or Internet service, and how are they using those technologies, and 3) among residents/businesses that are not using computer and/or broadband technology, what are their barriers to adoption.

Question 23:

Will the allocated stimulus funds depend on how well connected the area of the state currently is?

Answer 23:

The residential and business surveys will be used to measure the accuracy and validity of broadband availability data as part of the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. For information regarding the metrics used to determine which projects receive Federal funding, please visit the NTIA's Broadband Technology Opportunities Program (BTOP) website at <http://www.ntia.doc.gov/broadbandgrants/index.html>.

Question 24:

Could you provide an example of the report that you are looking for?

Answer 24:

Connected Nation has collaborated with Vendors in the past to produce PowerPoint presentations, which can be found here:

Ohio- http://www.connectohio.org/mapping_and_research/

Tennessee-

http://www.connectedtennessee.org/research/tennessee_technology_trends_2009.php).

In addition, Connected Nation and its Vendors have used previous survey data to create policy briefs that can be found here: <http://connectednation.org/research/>. These samples should not be construed as a limit to the types of examples that the Vendor may provide; Connected Nation is looking for work that exemplifies insightful analysis and careful attention to detail.

If a Vendor is applying to either a) fulfill the data analysis consultant requirements; or b) fulfill the requirements of *both* data analysis consultant *and* the quantitative data provider requirements, then the Vendor should submit at least two (2) examples of finished work products (for example, reports, white papers, or data analysis summaries). If the Vendor is applying to fulfill *only* the requirements of the quantitative data provider, then the Vendor should provide a narrative explaining the type of data fields that were provided to the data's final user for its own report creation.

Question 25:

Is this project set-aside for small businesses, minority business enterprises, woman-owned business enterprises, or is it full and open competition?

Answer 25:

This project is a full and open competition.

Question 26:

If it is full and open competition, is there a small business set-aside portion?

Answer 26:

No.

Question 27:

Are we conducting 1200 consumer interviews and 800 business interviews in each state and PR per wave or does the entire wave across states and PR consist of 1200 consumer and 800 business interviews?

Answer 27:

For each residential wave (Q1 2010 and Q1 2011) the Quantitative Data Provider will complete 1,200 residential surveys in each of the twelve (12) states plus Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately 15,600 residential completes each residential wave. For each business survey wave (Q3 2010 and Q3 2011) the Quantitative Data Provider will complete approximately 800 business surveys in each of the twelve (12) states plus Puerto Rico, for a total of approximately 10,400 business completes in each business wave.

Question 28:

Will the quotas be representative of the universe sampled where we would expect them to fall naturally or will additional screening be required to achieve quotas?

Answer 28:

For each residential survey wave, target percentages and quotas will be determined for each state, based on the most recent US Census population estimates for each state. As such, the quantitative data vendor should anticipate additional screening methods to reach (or closely approximate, if determined necessary by Connected Nation) those quotas, based on age, gender, and county of residence (by urban-rural classification).

For each business survey wave, target percentages and quotas will be based on business establishment size and sector, with a similar number of businesses in each size category and in each sector to be completed. As such, the quantitative data vendor should anticipate additional screening methods to reach (or closely approximate, if determined necessary by Connected Nation) those quotas, based on business establishment size and sector.