



ADDENDUM #1

TO: POTENTIAL RESPONDING SUPPLIERS

FROM: Kristen Shelton, CPPB
Purchasing Specialist

DATE: June 17, 2024

SUBJECT: NC State University RFI #63-KGS1010288
Digital Marketing Strategy

This addendum is issued for information only on the above referenced request for information.

1. The response due date has been extended to 2:00PM, Monday, July 1, 2024.
2. See below for questions and answers.

RFI #63-KGS1010288 - Digital Marketing Strategy			
Question #	Reference Section	Question	University Response
1	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	What has your experience with digital marketing been previously?	We have done some in various units across the university.
2	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Were you previously doing this in-house or are you looking for a new agency? If you're ending a partnership with a current agency, why is it ending?	We were doing some aspects in house and we are looking to understand what the industry would recommend be done to help us reach our goals. This would be a new partnership.
3	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	What digital channels have you worked with previously, and are there any channels you are opposed to?	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tik Tok, and others. Only those banned by the state or federal government.
4	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	How have you previously measured campaigns? How do you define success?	Yes, success is defined by enrolled students.
5	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Will there be digital media efforts outside of what we may be doing geared toward the same audience? This would include industry vendors like Niche, EAB, etc.	It depends on what the solution is. Not likely, but without understanding what is being proposed, it is difficult to state. It is likely there will be internal efforts outside of what is being undertaken as we are a very decentralized university. However, every attempt is being made to minimize that potential.
6	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	This request focuses on undergraduate students. Is any media being done for graduate students? If so, how will we ensure messaging is aligned where needed across campaigns?	This is a phase 1 approach. Undergraduate students first. If we have success, a consideration might be explored for Graduate students.
7	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Are you open to non-digital channels to support efforts and specific geographic areas?	Yes. We are looking for the vendor to provide us with the best overall recommendation to achieve our goals. We are open to hearing the recommendation versus limiting our thoughts to what we think we know.
8	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Have you integrated marketing efforts with their CRM previously? What CRM do you use?	Yes. Slate
9	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Are you looking for students similar to your current student body, or a new type of student?	Both. We are in need of shaping our class. For the populations we need more of, the current students may fit that role. However, there are students not fully represented in our current student body. These would be new students.
10	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	What are the geographic demographics of your current student body?	<p>Fall 2024 Total Enrollment was 37,323 (27,323 Undergraduate, 10,000 Graduate), and 29966 (80/2) of total enrollment were from North Carolina (in-state). The UNC System requires 82% of first-time, first-year fall enrollments to be NC residents. Out-of-state applications remain strong in our traditional nearby markets, including Virginia, South Carolina, Maryland, and Georgia.</p> <p>Virginia - NOVA, Richmond, and Tidewater regions (top zips 20148, 23059, 23322, 23229)</p> <p>South Carolina - Low Country and Piedmont regions (top zips 29466, 29708, 29464, 29681)</p> <p>Maryland - Montgomery County and Central MD (top zips 20878, 21042, 21043, 21146)</p> <p>Georgia - Fulton County and DeKalb & Gwinnett (top zips 30022, 30004, 30024)</p> <p>When considering the enrolled student population, the states and regions where the cost of higher education is more costly or similar to North Carolina are more prevalent. South Carolina tends to have fewer enrolled students because of the affordable in-state options as well as funded scholarship programs for good students. Virginia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey remain strong markets for Admissions. We invest considerable time and resources traveling throughout these regions.</p>
11	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Does the current student body include first-generation students and students from underserved backgrounds? How are you currently targeting these students? What do you have in place for first-generation and underserved students once they get to campus? (ex. Financial support, academic support, etc.)	Yes, segmented communications have been developed using email campaigns (drip and blast), text/SMS messaging, and targeted recruitment and yield materials (print and digital). Targeted recruitment and yield events are hosted both in person and virtually. We also have a full-time social media specialist who develops content and coordinates social media efforts for admissions.

12	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Are you currently marketing digitally to families or high school counselors?	We are geofencing top-feeder Community Colleges, which would include prospective students, transfer advisors, and Community College faculty. We have engaged in some IP targeting for first-year students that would be visible to their households but have not developed family-specific digital campaign to complement our family email campaign. We do have robust family engagement on social media, FB lives, newsletters, and events that could be promoted with a digital strategy.
13	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	For transfers, do you want to increase students in any specific programs, or just increase the transfer student population in general?	Both. However, our number one priority is to increase our application pool overall. Second priority to educate students similar the first year about all their options. Example, very popular majors and helping them understand alternative majors that would help them reach their career goals.
14	Introduction: Purpose and Background, pg. 2	Do you have access to first-party data lists? What kinds of lists do you have? This could be inclusive of: First-generation students (current) Underserved areas Prospective student parents/guardians High schools to target for counselors and on-site influencers Schools to target for transfer students Prioritized programs for transfer students	The admissions office licenses the bulk of their names from the Collegeboard. Smaller lists of students come from Encoura, Phi Theta Kappa (transfer only), Niche (Fall 2024 implementation), College Greenlight (first generation/CBO), and organic college fair and website traffic. We get access to all school counselor information from Commonapp based on the previous year's application pool. We also have a list of CBOs and their contact information.
15	2.1	What is the problem we are solving for? Tell us more about the current state of NC State and how this initiative will help you all. Why now?	Introduction: NC State University is seeking to shape its undergraduate class to be fully representative of the diverse population of North Carolina. While we receive a significant number of undergraduate applications, we need to ensure a more diverse mix to better reflect the state's demographics. Problem Statement: Currently, there is a disparity in the diversity of applicants, impacting our ability to enroll a representative student body. Additionally, there is a knowledge gap among students and parents regarding the variety of majors and career paths available, leading many to focus on a single major without exploring other viable options. Current State of NC State: As a land grant institution, NC State is committed to serving the people of North Carolina by providing accessible and high-quality education. However, to fully achieve our mission, we must enhance our outreach and support to prospective students from underrepresented communities and various regions of the state. Objectives of the Initiative: - Increase Awareness and Reach: Implement a comprehensive digital marketing strategy to enhance outreach to diverse communities across North Carolina. - Educate Students and Families: Bridge the knowledge gap by providing clear and accessible information about the various majors and career paths available at NC State. - Support Informed Decision-Making: Empower students and families to make informed decisions about their education through detailed information and personalized guidance. - Enhance Enrollment Diversity: Shape an undergraduate class that better represents the state's population, aligning with our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Why Now? Addressing these disparities promptly is crucial to better serving North Carolina and fulfilling our mission. Immediate action will help ensure our incoming classes are more representative and that all students have access to the full range of educational opportunities at NC State.
16	2.1	Are your current efforts being attributed all the way through your Slate instance? Are their opportunities you have identified in order to better connect the data?	No. We have numerous opportunities to improve our tracking of our efforts and ensure that we track all the way through enrollment. This would include efforts by our University level Marketing team, Enrollment Management direct efforts, and efforts by our different Colleges.

17	2.1	How do your current marketing efforts work with your enrollment efforts? Do you act as a unified team or are their opportunities for improvement?	We are currently working to consolidate and work more like a unified team but there are areas of opportunities to improve.
18	2.1	What has worked well in the past?	This is difficult to say, as we've not effectively tracked the results and can not attribute specific actions to specific outcomes.
19	2.1	What has your team typically "owned" and how have you leaned on a partner for similar work in the past?	This is a two fold response. We are working to establish better lines of partnerships with internal stakeholders who have the capabilities and capacity to support some of this work. However, we have limited staff and need the support of external vendors. We have done one off's for digital ad campaigns, some Slate development, and some isolated marketing drip campaigns. We have the opportunity to "own" the majority of the work just not the capacity.
20	2.1	What is most important to you in a partnership?	Communication, transparency, clear measurables of success, successful track records of achieving goals and objectives.
21	2.1 #3	What is your current CRM and marketing automation + enrollment tech stack, and is it imperative that the vendor uses your existing platform(s), or would you be open to new platforms? Would the vendor need to "push the buttons" or would your internal team handle that?	Slate is the primary CRM and marketing automation + PeopleSoft is the enrollment tech stack. It would be beneficial for the vendor to have expertise with Slate as to minimize the need for importing or managing outcomes across multiple platforms. However, if there is a solid method of measuring efforts from suspect to enrolled students across multiple platforms, we would be open to understanding how that would work. The vendor may need to push the buttons as it all depends on what part of the solution we are talking about. Some parts could be managed internally, however, some may not. Without understanding the scope of the proposed solution it is difficult to be definitive on who would need to push the button.
22	2.2 #4-5	Budget range and timeline is dependent upon the goals and needs of the client, so are you looking for general enrollment campaign strategy and support, or will any specific departments also need campaign support?	The goal is to have a comprehensive approach that takes into account all majors and helping students understand their options. General enrollment campaign strategies would not be sufficient in effectively shaping our class as we should have parity of representation in every major.
23	2.2 #5	What was your average ad/media spend over the last 2 years?	This is not an applicable question for we are looking to gain an understanding of what is needed not what we have done. We acknowledge our past spends are not adequate nor near the significant levels needed to reach our goals. A digital first strategy versus a people first strategy is what we are attempting to shift the university towards.
24	2. RFI Questions (general)	What are your percentage increase goals for enrollment yield (from previous years)?	We don't have specific goals here as it is not an overall number that we are trying to achieve but rather improve numbers to be reflective of the current population of the state by major. We would need to look not only at the University numbers, but every college, and every major. Each, having their own set of yield data.
25	2. RFI Questions (general)	What area(s) are you trying to reach - is it mostly focused in NC, or are you looking at other states/regions and indicators?	Primary goal is NC. in support of our land grant mission.
26	2. RFI Questions (general)	The RFI is called "Digital Marketing Strategy," yet many of the questions span beyond strategy. Will the potential contract also include implementation of the enrollment strategy and campaigns?	Yes. depending on the recommendations that are sent back and what is within the capacity of the team and what additional supports will be needed.
27	Section 2.2, #4 & 5	Would you be interested in seeing a sample scope?	Yes
28	2.2, #1	Do you have any program-specific enrollment goals we should keep in mind?	We will, but the primary scope of this request is to fully understand how best to develop a project scope that aligns with the mission of the university. The strategy tactics should be applicable for each program and depending on what specific needs for each program, will dictate the sub tactics that are most appropriate. For example, we have majors with too many applicants that would need to inform them of all their various other options. This would include programs without enough applicants.

29	Section 1 introduction, "...endeavor to establish an inclusive platform where students and families, particularly those from first-generation or underserved backgrounds, can delve into majors and career options, offering additional support and resources..."	Would you be interested in exploring a microsite?	Yes
30	3	In addition to the completed NCSU RFI Document PDF, are we allowed to submit supplementary files to showcase our work – for example creative portfolio media examples in MP3, MP4, MOV file format?	Yes, you can submit additional PDF documentation. For media formats, it would be best to provide a link in your response to the media content.
31	Standard Response Format Requirement, pg. 4	Our proposals and RFI responses are typically written in Figtree, which is also a sans serif font. Is this acceptable instead of Times New Roman or Arial?	Yes, this is acceptable.
32	General Timelines	Do you have a preferred timeline for the rollout of the digital marketing strategy?	Not yet. We are gathering information to help define overall scope and capacity.
33	General Timelines	Are there any key metrics and goals that NC State would like to achieve from this initiative (i.e. a minimum # of new enrollments from this digital marketing strategy)?	We'd like to bench mark how we currently shape up to the State of NC in terms of representation and then set goals beyond that. Recognizing that we can not set measures of success until we understand what we are doing and how we are doing it.
34	General Budget and Resource Allocation	Can you provide an indicative budget range for this digital marketing initiative?	No as this is a new endeavor and we need to understand what vendors are recommending to achieve the goals stated. Keeping in mind, that we are a state agency with limited budgets.
35	General Budget and Resource Allocation	Are there any existing partnerships or sponsorships that should be factored into the budget and strategy?	Not at the moment.
36	General Compliance and Privacy	Are there any specific data privacy regulations or compliance standards that we need to adhere to, beyond GDPR and CCPA?	If a Request for Proposal is issued following this RFI, all compliance and privacy regulations will be provided and listed in our terms and conditions.
37	General Compliance and Privacy	Does NC State have any internal policies regarding data usage and privacy that we should be aware of?	If a Request for Proposal is issued following this RFI, all compliance and privacy regulations will be provided and listed in our terms and conditions.
38	General Technologies	Are there any preferred technologies or platforms that NC State currently uses or plans to use for digital marketing efforts?	Slate, and social media channels that best work for the outcomes we want.
39	General Technologies	How open is NC State to adopting new tools or platforms recommended by vendors?	completely open if the platforms can work seamlessly with the other technologies that would help us track students through enrolled.