

	ADDENDA 2
	RFP NO. 99-JD22024
	Commodity Code: 8014 Description: Marketing and Distribution
	Using Agency Name: GTCC
	Date: Wednesday, July 26, 2023

This addendum addresses the following:

RESPONSES TO VENDOR QUESTIONS:

- Q Upon review, do you have a weekly or monthly estimate as to how many hours of media relations work would be needed?
A Looking back at the last year, 70-90 hours weekly seems to be the norm, although slower months may only involve 60 hours, and busier months may involve as many as 110 hours (e.g., when we're coordinating a noteworthy media event).
- Q Can you confirm its 70-90 hours weekly and not monthly?
A These are monthly estimates. It really depends on what we have going on at the college as to how it shakes out weekly. Some weeks may be 3-5 hours, some may be 20+ if we have a press event.
- Q All vendor questions and answers will be posted via addenda on 07/26/23 per the RFP schedule. I will be able to find a link to the addenda via the RFP when it's available, correct?
A Correct. It will be uploaded in addition to the already posted RFP with the title, "Addendum #."
- Q Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)
A Yes. Please review section 3.5 for additional information regarding factors the State must consider when evaluating proposals from outside the USA.
- Q Whether we need to come over there for meetings?
A Yes, on occasion.
- Q Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)
A Due to differing time zones and potential delays in delivery, this would not be ideal.
- Q Can we submit the proposals via email?
A Proposals must be submitted through NC electronic Vendor Portal (eVP) through their website <https://evp.nc.gov/>
- Q Can you tell me whether the individuals providing the requested services will be required to work onsite, remote, or some form of hybrid work?
A It will be a mix of on-site and remote work, depending on the needs of the Marketing and Communications Department, and what services you are able to provide.
- Q Is there an incumbent agency and who is the incumbent agency? (past work referenced on page 12, section 5.1)
A The college has worked with multiple vendors over the past few years. We anticipate that some past vendors may apply.

- Q How will the college measure the success of the media relations? Will this be a new list that is developed or does the college already have a media relations list? (section 5.2.1, page 12)
- A Success will be measured by monthly vendor-provided updates on media activities, coverage, and the effectiveness of strategies, including quantifiable results from media coverage.
- Q When was the last crisis communications plan developed? (section 5.2.1, page 12)
- A It is reviewed and updated annually, most recently Spring 2023.
- Q Are all tasks and deliverables in section 5.2 (pages 12-14) to be executed in entirety year over year or is the college looking for a partner who could potentially execute this range of tasks dependent on the need throughout the year?
- A We are seeking a partner who could potentially execute the range of responsibilities listed. The college requires support in all areas — media relations, creative services, and videography services — but there is no guarantee that all of these tasks and deliverables would be needed year over year.
- Q Please clarify how many additional vendors the primary agency of record will need to coordinate. Please elaborate on the project management role of the agency of record in managing these contract vendors with staff. (page 13, section 5.2.2)
- A Our preference is not to partner with a single vendor that would need to contract with other vendors outside of their area of expertise to meet the objectives. For example, we do not want to partner with a creative agency that will contract with a media relations vendor to deliver services to GTCC. We would prefer to contract directly with each vendor and have them collaborate as needed on specific projects. This has worked well for us in recent years.
- Q Describe the types of marketing strategies or tactics that you have deployed in the past. (5.2.1)
- A We've drastically increased our digital footprint through targeted ads, social media, SEO, etc. We've shifted our content to storytelling, focusing on people (students, faculty, employee partners, alumni, etc.) and sharing their success stories. In addition, we've increased our output of press releases and media pitches, which has boosted awareness locally, regionally, and nationally. We see great response to mail campaigns as well, particularly 8.5"x5.5" postcards with QR codes.
- Q What marketing efforts have been effective vs. ineffective and why?
- A Effective efforts: Balancing print and digital advertising with customized messaging for multiple target audiences. Relying on people to tell the story. Focusing on outcomes for students, the workforce, and the community instead of generally raising awareness about the school.
- A Ineffective efforts: Generic ads and content featuring photos of buildings, heavy graphics, overuse of color, and elusive, overblown text.
- Our demographic is diverse and down-to-earth. Our marketing efforts succeed when they follow suit.
- Q Do you currently have a brand standards guide?
- A Yes.
- Q Is the University open to a Creative Services retainer pricing model?
- A Our standard approach to these partnerships is to contract for a bulk volume of hours, with a deliverables menu that designates the hours needed for various project types.
- A No, the college is not interested. This has not been effective in the past.
- Q Would the university be open to [Vendor] outsourcing a spokesperson for crisis situations? Or an outsourced PR firm.
- A No, we would not consider outsourcing a spokesperson. The college has designated spokespeople (i.e., college executives) for specific subject matters. The vendor may be a spokesperson when issuing a written statement on occasion where they would be credited as a "representative from GTCC." Alternatively, they may be a spokesperson in a crisis incident if the designated spokespeople are unable to do so because of the nature of the crisis.

Q What is the most important priority or focus for GTCC's marketing efforts?

A Our priority is to drive enrollment to the college with strategic and targeted marketing approaches. We've done a good job of building general awareness, and now it is time to focus on identified targeted segments, deepening the public knowledge of what we do. Most people think we're a steppingstone to a four-year school or that we only offer technical education programs — but we are so much more, and we want to help our community understand the breadth of what we can do together.

Q What are the goals of the College and how does marketing play a role in supporting these efforts?

A Visit <https://www.gtcc.edu/about/vision-mission.php> to review our institutional goals. We build our marketing and communications plans in the division's annual unit plan, which feeds into the institutional goals. We also receive guidance on priorities from the college's executive team.

Q Is GTCC anticipating engaging a single vendor for all services listed? Or are you looking for a best strategic partner in each service?

A Section 3.1 states, "While the intent of this RFP is to award a Contract(s) to single Vendor, the State reserves the right to make separate awards to different Vendors for one or more line items, to not award one or more line items or to cancel this RFP in its entirety without awarding a Contract, if it is considered to be most advantageous to the State to do so." GTCC's award will be based on the criteria listed in section 3.4 and the proposals received.

Q Will there be one primary point of contact? Or would the partner engage with multiple POCs?

A For the most part, the vendor will engage with two key marketing team members; however, based on the project, there may be a need to include other employees or students. Any such contact will be coordinated by marketing team members. This is especially true for media relations. Marketing team members typically identify subject matter experts and then connect them with a media relations vendor for prep, interviews, etc.

Q Is there an internal stakeholder who owns media relations that would be our point of contact specific to media relations?

A Yes, media relations are managed by the marketing director and by the vice president for college advancement (when it involves the college president).

Q Is there a prior media plan with metrics, market research, or audience profiles we would have access to?

A Some of that is available.

Q Are there existing relationships with news outlets we need to be considerate of?

A We have strong relationships with all local news outlets.

Q Will there be other content creators or owners who would be adding to social media, GTCC's website, etc.? If so, who owns approval and the overall direction for content?

A Social media is managed internally by the marketing team. While some content created by the vendor will be worked into the social media plan, the vendor will not directly add content to platforms. The marketing director has the final approval for content. The vice president for college advancement will be a backup to the director.

Q Is there an expected frequency for social posts, digital ads, e-blasts, etc. or will this be determined by the media strategy development?

A No. Content will be created for specific campaigns, and frequency will vary based on the time of year.

Q Does serving as spokesperson during a crisis situation ever include speaking at press conferences or only organizing them with/for school representative(s)?

A The college has a crisis response plan which designates as spokespeople the college president, vice president for college advancement, and vice president for instruction. The vendor may be a spokesperson when issuing a written statement on occasion where they would be credited as a "representative from GTCC."

Alternatively, they may be a spokesperson in a crisis incident if the designated spokespeople are unable to do so because of the nature of the crisis.

Q Is media training meant to be event- or interview-specific?

A For the most part, media training is interview-specific. There are times we need to do group training for larger initiatives.

Q How is success defined for media relations? Is it data/analytics, increased enrollment, etc.?

A Success is defined by data/analytics to note engagement, publicity value, and media hits that meet or exceed past metrics.

Q Is there a budget for the purchase of email lists, mailing lists, Google search ads, etc.?

A Yes.

Q Are there existing relationships with local publications?

A Yes.

Q Is this portion of the scope intended to be specific to the donor and alumni audience? If so, are you open to a discovery phase that includes research with focus groups for all audiences, specifically potential students, and high schools? (Section 5.2.2, Creative Services, Discovery, and Messaging)

A Yes, on both counts.

Q Will we have access to existing marketing materials for donors and alumni?

A Yes.

Q Are you currently using any content management software, email platforms, or scheduling software? (For example, Hubspot, Capterra, MailChimp, Hootsuite, etc.)

A Yes, but we are in the process of consolidating into as few systems as possible.

Q Do you anticipate a need for program specific messaging or content or is the focus on the school as a whole?

A Both, but we mostly anticipate needing messaging and content specific to a program or initiative.

Q Are there existing brand guides, tone/voice style guides, web style guides we could have access to?

A Yes.

Q Is there an overall strategic plan for the organization we should be considerate of?

A Yes.

Q We won't know exactly what collateral is needed until we go through the discovery process and develop the marketing strategy. Are you open to a phased approach with the discovery/research process as the first phase?

A The college has recently done extensive discovery work for student recruitment, and we would like to use that as a starting place rather than spending the resources to do it again. We recognize that we may need a deeper level of discovery at some point, but we do not wish to take additional time to do that in the beginning. That said, the GTCC Foundation does require some level of discovery prior to the development of any donor/alumni messaging or collateral.

Q Is there an existing photo library we'd need to build on?

A Yes, and we have a college photographer on staff.

Q Do you use project management software? Are you open to using ours?

A Yes, we have software. No, we are not open to integrating with a partner's software.

Q Would we have a main point of contact? (5.2.2, Creative Services, Project Management)

A Yes, the marketing director and the marketing coordinator.

Q This RFP is extremely extensive and therefore requires a large time investment. Is it possible to extend the deadline of Wednesday, August 2, 2023, to provide more time to prepare?

A After deliberation, GTCC will agree to extend the deadline of the bid opening to: 3:00PM ET on Wednesday, August 16, 2023. A separate Bid Addenda will be issued through eVP in addition to this RFP to notify all Vendors.

Q Can the agency respond to the requirements it is most qualified for (such as Creative Services and Videography Services), or does the RFP require that the agency respond to all listed services?

A The Agency shall respond only to the services that they are able to provide. It is not a requirement to respond to all listed services. Vendors who do not provide all services will still be considered for award during evaluation as long as they are deemed responsive, meeting all requirements as listed in the bid.

Q In order to provide a monthly average, can you supply an estimated number of video projects to be produced for the year?

A I don't know that we can give a fully accurate estimate on videos because these crop up based on needs throughout the year. Maybe 10-15?

Q Can you elaborate on what this section is stating? (section 4.10 Agency Insurance Requirements Modification)

A The Default Insurance Coverage from the General Terms and Conditions can be found in the link listed on the final page, Attachment C: North Carolina General Terms & Conditions, section 15.b.2. The section is an indication of which subsection of coverage in the T&C applies to this RFP. Your insurance should cover what is listed in 15.b.2 as listed. Here is a direct link if you don't have an electric copy of the RFP:
https://files.nc.gov/ncdoa/pandc/OnlineForms/Form_North-Carolina-General-Terms-and-Conditions_11.2021.pdf

Q Are there any addendums/Q&A for this RFP that have been posted?

A An addendum with all the questions and answers will be posted by Wednesday, July 26, 2023. As of this email, no addenda have been posted for this solicitation. (07/21/23 11:18AM ET)

Q Could you also confirm the proposal submission method, please?

A All proposals are to be submitted through the NC electronic Vendor Portal. For more information, please visit <https://evp.nc.gov>. No emailed submissions will be accepted.

Q Could you let us know what the budget is for this project?

A This is a supportive role for the GTCC Marketing and Communications Department. Vendor(s) will be used on an as-needed basis. There is a tentative budget for the services, but it will be allocated on a per-project basis. Services in this RFP, as per section 5.1, are not guaranteed, and the estimated number of hours are listed for informational purposes only.

Q Could you let us know if you have a local preference or are you open to a Canadian agency that has done similar work with clients across the United States, with some currently being the States of California, Colorado, and Wyoming?

A Local preference to avoid delays in communication and production.

Q We would like to request an extension for the proposal submission, please?

A This solicitation has been extended to 3:00PM ET, August 16th per bid addenda 1, posted on 07/21/23. I have attached a copy of for your reference. It can also be found with the original solicitation under the tab labeled *Addenda* in eVP.

Q What type of Videography services are you expecting?

A Please see section 5.2.3 Videography Services to review what the Marketing Department is expecting.

Q What should be the “Solicitation #” on these submitted documents? [Attachments D, E, F, and G]

A Please use “99-JD22024” for all attachments.

Q Having not been involved with any Lobbying activities in the past, what forms are expected to meet the needs of this section? [Attachment H]

A If you have not been involved with any lobbying activities in the past, please fill out “Certification for Contract, Grants, Loans and Cooperative Agreements” only. OMB Standard Form LLL is a disclosure form if activities have occurred.

By providing signature below, the vendor is indicating that they have reviewed the question(s) and answer(s) for RFP No. 99-JD22012. **This Addendum should be signed and returned with the IFB/RFQ package.**

Company

Printed Name

Signature

Date