

RFP 12-SCC05152024

Addendum 1-Answers to Vendor Questions

1. What is the overall budget, including agency fees, allocated to this one-year contract?
 - a. \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00

2. Could you please share with me what is the proposed budget for the Advertising Agency Services - Advertising Agencies Specializing in Higher Education Marketing RFP? If the budget has not been established, could you please share with me what is the historical spend on such services by Southeastern CC?
 - a. \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00

3. Could you provide details on the budget and how it is divided between creative services and media buying?
 - a. The budget allocation for advertising services at Southeastern Community College (SCC) is a collaborative process between the college and the selected vendor. While SCC has its own creative agency and content creators, the vendor's primary responsibilities include media placement, audience segmentation, tracking, and A/B testing. Media buying is a significant component of this budget, which is strategically distributed to maximize impact across the college's three key enrollment periods: Summer, Fall, and Spring. Additionally, digital ads are maintained year-round to ensure ongoing brand relevance and awareness.

 - b. The specific distribution of the budget is determined through a strategic plan developed by the vendor, which stretches the budget over a 12-month period. This plan is critical for laying out how funds will be allocated towards various advertising activities, particularly focusing on timing and channel selection to optimize enrollment drives during peak terms. The vendor's strategy and recommendations are essential in this planning phase, but ultimately, the approval and final decisions rest with SCC. This process ensures that the expenditures align closely with the college's goals and the effectiveness of the campaigns can be maximally leveraged.

4. Please disclose all the campaign flight dates for the year and the yearly dates (e.g., July 2024 to June 2025). Will this contract cover the summer, fall, winter session, and spring semesters? Additionally, please provide the percentage of the budget allocated to each separate campaign.
 - a. July 2024-June 2025. the college's three key enrollment periods: Summer, Fall, and Spring. Additionally, digital ads are maintained year-round to ensure ongoing brand relevance and awareness.

11. Beyond URL tracking, which tools and reports are used for assessing the effectiveness of media buying?
- a. the selected advertising agency is required to provide a real-time online reporting portal or dashboard. This dashboard should enable SCC to track the performance of advertising campaigns at any time. The inclusion of such a tool is crucial for SCC as it allows for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of various marketing efforts.

Key features expected in the dashboard include:

Metrics on Response: The dashboard should provide detailed analytics on how potential students are responding to the campaigns.

Audience Interaction: Insights into how the target audience is interacting with the ads, including data on engagement rates, click-through rates, and other relevant metrics.

12. Which metrics, such as Cost Per Engagement and Conversion Rates, are used to evaluate media campaign outcomes?
- a. CPE, Conversion Rates, CTR, Engagement rates, Lead generations (RFI submissions), etc.
13. How is the success and reach of media campaigns gauged?
- a. CPE, Conversion Rates, CTR, Engagement rates, Lead generations (RFI submissions), etc.
14. With evolving digital trends, how are challenges such as the phasing out of third-party cookies and stringent data privacy rules being navigated?
- a. This is a process that we can discuss with the vendor upon Contract Award.
15. Are specific databases used for targeted media campaigns?
- a. Yes.
16. Are WBE/DBE requirements mandatory for this contract, and if so, what percentage of the contract is typically allocated to WDBEs? Is it mandatory for disadvantaged certified agencies to be certified in the state of North Carolina?
- a. No. HUB certification does not guarantee that you will receive a contract with the State of North Carolina nor any public entity. However, HUB certification does provide greater exposure for your firm to the business community. Please visit the HUB website for details on HUB Certification in NC. <https://www.doa.nc.gov/divisions/historically-underutilized-businesses-hub>

17. Will creative assets be provided, and if not, to what degree are creative assets needed?
- a. Yes
18. Is Columbus County the service area to focus on for these efforts?
- a. Yes
19. Could you detail all of your target audiences?
- a. High Schoolers and/or recent graduates (age 17-20). Adult learners & career shifters (age 25-50).
20. Do you have a budget or budget range you could share for this effort?
- a. \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00
21. Do you have an enrollment management plan you'd be willing to share?
- a. We do not have a formal document. We are going through the process of creating this.
22. The RFP states that the awarded vendor “Must be prepared to work directly with various list providers and acquire the list data immediately upon release of the new student information from each identified list source,” - is this in reference to lists that the college already has access to, or would the awarded vendor be responsible for seeking out and connecting with additional list providers to gain new list data?
- a. Yes, the college has access to lists and a list server. However, the college will consider more recommendations by the chosen vendor.
23. What are the delivery modalities of programs for the target audiences?
- a. The RFP from Southeastern Community College (SCC) outlines a comprehensive approach to marketing and student recruitment, focusing on various modern communication channels to reach and engage potential students. Here are the main delivery modalities and strategies mentioned for targeting the audience:

1. Digital Advertising:

- The use of sophisticated digital advertising strategies is emphasized, including geo-targeting and retargeting, to effectively reach potential students within specific geographic areas and demographic groups.

2. Direct Marketing:

- Utilization of email campaigns, and personalized landing pages. These efforts are coordinated through the college’s CRM system to ensure effective communication tracking and engagement.

3. **Social Media Campaigns:**

- Active engagement across popular social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and possibly others. This includes tailored ads aimed at prospective students and their influencers, such as parents and school counselors.

4. **Search Engine Marketing:**

- Targeting potential students and parents through search engine marketing, ensuring that SCC appears prominently in search results related to college searches in key markets.

5. **Multi-channel Communications:**

- Integration of various channels to ensure a cohesive message across all platforms.

6. **Behavioral and Predictive Modeling:**

- Employing advanced analytics to guide recruitment efforts, focusing on behavioral and predictive models to tailor marketing strategies to the most responsive audience segments.

7. **Broadcast Media:**

- Although digital strategies are highlighted, the RFP also allows for the use of traditional media such as radio, TV, and streaming services to create a comprehensive outreach strategy that includes both digital and traditional media.

Each of these modalities is designed to create a seamless and engaging user experience that guides potential students from initial awareness through to application and enrollment, leveraging both digital innovation and traditional marketing techniques to reach a broad and diverse audience effectively.

24. Does “improve completion rates” refer to applications or academic programs (ie, graduates)

- a. Both

25. In terms of marketing and enrollment goals, are there specific degrees or programs that SCC wants to promote as part of this campaign? If so, what are they?

- a. While we want to promote all programs our primary focus for 2024-2025 are dual enrollment, transfer, nursing, engineering, and automotive.

26. What are SCC’s enrollment and marketing goals? Are there specific targets for the 24-25 school year?

- a. We would like to increase enrollment for each semester by at least 5%

27. Please define “enrollment management services” in terms of SCC’s expectations for an external vendor.
 - a. Suggestions and guidance on how to improve our enrollment management to help close the loop with leads generated from ads.
28. What are examples of typical publications that SCC distributes? Eg, brochures, postcards, catalogs, etc.
 - a. These are not included in this budget.
29. Are adult students also a target audience for this campaign, or only high schoolers and parents?
 - a. Adult students are also a target audience.
30. What lead nurturing activities (digital or otherwise) does SCC already use?
 - a. Email Marketing, Content Marketing, Social Media Engagement, Retargeting Ads, Personal Outreach, Direct Mail, Community Outreach.
31. What is the anticipated budget for this project?
 - a. \$60,000-\$80,000
32. Does SCC already have a preferred print house, or is it up to the vendor to provide?
 - a. We have one.
33. Approximately how many list sources/providers does SCC already utilize?
 - a. 2
34. What is the scope of the “campus community updates and trainings?” Eg, in-person workshops, webinars, asynchronous training modules, etc.
 - a. Webinars. The college is in the process of implementing a new CRM and encourages the selected vendor to train admission officers best practices to go along with leads from ads.
35. What level subscription does SCC have for Element451 – Bolt, Ignite, Engage, or other? Would SCC be willing to upgrade subscription level if the vendor recommends it?
 - a. Ignite. We are not looking to upgrade but will consider the recommendation of the chosen vendor.
36. Which admission and enrollment platform(s) does SCC currently use, and does the platform integrate with Element451 for closed-loop reporting?
 - a. Colleague, Informer, and Element 451. We do not currently have full integration yet but are working towards that.

37. As part of the “social media plan,” will the vendor need to supply paid ads, organic posts, or both?
- a. Paid ads. Most creatives will be provided. The vendors’ primary focus is placement and targeting.
38. Is there an intended budget for the contract’s duration?
- a. \$60,000-\$80,000
39. Is this a new contract? If not, is there an incumbent vendor?
- a. Yes. This will be a new contract for Advertising Agency Services. Plan A Advertising is our current vendor on a project-by-project basis.
40. Can the College expand on its vision for ‘publication design and creation’ listed within the scope of work? Is this in reference to printed materials, or to digital media?
- a. Digital Media. Most creatives will be provided or created by the college, but recommendations by the chosen vendor are encouraged and considered.
41. Can the College expand on its vision for ‘Development and delivery of online resources’ listed within the scope of work? We are assuming that this is a reference to landing pages and web forms as exemplified in the following sentences; however, is there any additional web work foreseen at this time? Is the college looking to have a new website or an extension of the existing website developed by the awarded vendor?
- a. The college recently went through a web redesign and are not looking to do any heavy lifting of the site but encourage and consider recommendations by the chosen vendor.
42. Is the college open to awarding multiple vendors should no one vendor be able to fulfill the entire scope, i.e. print materials and/or radio advertising?
- a. No, however, print materials will not be a heavy lift of this contract. However, radio advertising is.