



Judicial Council of California

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

FINANCE DIVISION

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TO: POTENTIAL PROPOSERS

FROM: Administrative Office of the Courts
Center for Families, Children & the Courts Division

DATE: April 29, 2008

SUBJECT/PURPOSE OF MEMO: REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC), a division of the Administrative Office of the Courts, seeks the services of a consultant to recruit participants for and conduct focus groups of stakeholders in family law and family court, including self-represented litigants, judicial officers, court professionals, and attorneys. Specific tasks will include recruiting contacts in study counties, overseeing the recruitment of participants, arranging space and incentives for the groups, and conducting, video-taping and transcribing the groups.

ACTION REQUIRED: You are invited to review and respond to the attached Request for Proposals (RFP), as posted at <http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/rfp/>:

Project Title: ELKINS FAMILY LAW TASK FORCE ASSESSMENT: QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

RFP Number: CFCC 06-08 Elkins Family-LM

QUESTIONS TO THE SOLICITATIONS MAILBOX: Questions regarding this RFP should be directed to solicitations@jud.ca.gov by **Friday, May 9, 2008, 2008, no later than 3 p.m. (PST)**

DATE AND TIME PROPOSAL DUE: There will not be a pre-proposal conference for this RFP.
Proposals must be received by **Tuesday, May 13, 2008, no later than 3 p.m. (PST)**

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL: Proposals must be sent to:
Judicial Council of California
Administrative Office of the Courts
Attn: Nadine McFadden, RFP No. CFCC 06-08 Elkins Family-LM
455 Golden Gate Avenue, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102-3688

JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF CALIFORNIA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 The Judicial Council of California, chaired by the Chief Justice of California, is the chief policy making agency of the California judicial system. The California Constitution directs the Council to improve the administration of justice by surveying judicial business, recommending improvements to the Courts, and making recommendations annually to the Governor and the Legislature. The Council also adopts rules for Court administration, practice, and procedure, and performs other functions prescribed by law. The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) is the staff agency for the Council and assists both the Council and its chair in performing their duties.

1.2 THE CENTER FOR FAMILIES, CHILDREN & THE COURTS

1.2.1 The Center for Families, Children & the Courts (CFCC), a division of the AOC, provides a range of services to Courts in California, including research and technical assistance for juvenile and family Courts, collaborative justice Courts, cases involving self-represented litigants, and cases involving family violence.

1.3 THE ELKINS FAMILY LAW TASK FORCE ASSESSMENT PROJECT

1.3.1 The Elkins Family Law Task Force was established in response to a California Supreme Court opinion, *Elkins v. Superior Court (Elkins)*, (2008) 41 Cal. 4th 1337. The Task Force will be charged with proposing measures to assist trial courts in achieving efficiency and fairness in family law proceedings and to insure access to justice for litigants, many of whom are self-represented.

1.3.2 One component of assessment for the use of the Task Force, and the subject of this RFP, is qualitative research with stakeholders in the family court. The Task Force intends to conduct focus groups with family law self-represented litigants, judicial officers, court professionals, and attorneys.

2.0 TIMELINE FOR THIS RFP

2.1 The AOC has developed the following list of key events from the time of the issuance of this RFP through the intent to award contract. All dates are subject to change at the discretion of the AOC.

EVENT	KEY DATE
RFP issued to http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/reference/rfp/ :	April 29, 2008
Deadline for questions to solicitations@jud.ca.gov	Friday, May 9, 2008 No later than 3 p.m.
Latest date and time proposal may be submitted	Tuesday, May 13, 2008 No later than 3 p.m.
Evaluation of proposals (<i>estimate only</i>)	May 14, 2008 through May 15, 2008
Notice of Intent to Award (<i>estimate only</i>)	Friday May 16, 2008
Negotiations and execution of contract (<i>estimate only</i>)	Friday May 23, 2008

3.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

- 3.1 The AOC seeks the services of a consultant with expertise in qualitative research and data analysis, preferably in a court setting, to assist AOC research and legal staff in the implementation of focus groups.
- 3.2 The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to secure a contract to conduct focus groups and provide a preliminary analysis of the findings. The research activities will take place from the date of the execution of the contract through October 31, 2008. The contractor must conduct at least 18 focus groups of 1 1/2 hours in duration, each consisting of 8-12 persons recruited from the following areas: self-represented litigants (7 groups including at least one group of Spanish speaking litigants), judicial officers (3 groups), attorneys (3 groups), court staff and other court professionals (6 groups including 2 groups of court clerks, 2 groups of self help center staff and family law facilitators). The research tasks to be performed by the contractor will include: contacting initial contact persons provided by the AOC in approximately six counties and determining the best contacts in each county for recruiting and hosting focus groups; assisting the county contacts in recruiting participants, locating venues, and providing support for the groups; establishing and paying the focus group costs including room rental, food and incentives for participants; converting the topic guidelines provided by the AOC into focus group scripts; providing informed consent forms and other written materials for the focus groups; traveling to the counties and conducting the focus groups with one or more staff from the AOC; transcribing tapes and providing them in electronic Microsoft Word files; translating Spanish language focus group transcripts and providing them in electronic Microsoft Word files; providing complete tapes; providing notes on each focus group to the AOC; providing a summary of responses in 4 to 5 major topic areas, and checking the transcripts for accuracy.
- 3.3 The Work of this RFP is provided in *Attachment 2 Contract Terms, Exhibit D - Work to be Performed.*

4.0 RFP ATTACHMENTS

4.1 Included as part of this RFP are the following attachments:

4.1.1 Attachment 1 - Administrative Rules Governing Request for Proposals. Proposers shall follow the rules, set forth in *Attachment 1, in preparation and submittal of their proposals.*

4.1.2 Attachment 2 - Contract Terms. Contracts with successful firms will be signed by the parties on a State of California Standard Agreement form and will include terms appropriate for this project. Terms and conditions typical for the requested services are attached as *Attachment 2 - Contract Terms* and include: *Exhibits A through E.*

4.1.3 Attachment 3 - Vendor's Acceptance of the RFP's Contract Terms. Proposers must either indicate acceptance of Contract Terms, as set forth in *Attachment 2 – Contract Terms*, or clearly identify exceptions to the Contract Terms, as set forth in this *Attachment 3.*

4.1.3.1 If exceptions are identified, then proposers must also submit (i) a red-lined version of *Attachment 2 – Contract Terms*, that clearly tracks proposed changes to this attachment, and (ii) written documentation to substantiate each such proposed change.

4.1.4 Attachment 4 - Payee Data Record Form. The AOC is required to obtain and keep on file, a completed Payee Data Record for each vendor prior to entering into a contract with that vendor. Therefore, vendor's proposal must include a completed and signed *Payee Data Record Form, set forth as Attachment 4.*

5.0 EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

Proposals will be evaluated by the AOC using the following criteria, in order of descending priority:

- 5.1 Quality of work plan submitted.
- 5.2 Credentials of staff to be assigned to the Project.
- 5.3 Experiences on similar assignments, particularly those involving focus group research, facilitation and analysis.
- 5.4 Reasonableness of cost projections.
- 5.5 Ability to meet timing requirements to complete the Project.

6.0 SPECIFICS OF A RESPONSIVE TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

The following information shall be included as the technical portion of the proposal:

6.1 Quality of work plan submitted.

6.1.1 Approach.

6.1.1.1 Proposed focus group project and organization.

6.1.1.2 Proposed methodology. Include plan for identifying focus group or interviewing respondents.

6.1.1.3 Proposed methods to encourage participation in focus groups.

6.1.1.4 Proposed method for video recording and transcribing focus groups and interview material.

6.1.1.5 Proposed plan for obtaining consent from subjects and protecting subject confidentiality

6.1.2 Contact information. Provide proposer's point of contact, including name, physical and electronic addresses, and telephone and facsimile numbers.

6.1.3 Tax recording information. Complete and submit *Attachment 4 - Payee Data Record Form*. Note that if an individual or sole proprietorship, using a social security number for tax recording purposes, is awarded a contract, the social security number will be required prior to finalizing a contract.

6.1.4 Compliance with Contract Terms. Complete and submit *Attachment 3 - Vendor's Acceptance of the RFP's Contract Terms*. If changes to *Attachment 3* are proposed, then also submit red-lined version of *Attachment 3- Vendor's Acceptance of the RFP's Contract Terms* as well as written justification supporting any such proposed changes.

6.2 Credentials of staff to be assigned to the Project. Describe key staff's knowledge of the requirements necessary to complete this project. Provide professional qualifications and experience of key staff, as well as each individual's ability and experience in conducting the proposed activities. Submit hardcopy of key staff's information in proposal as well as electronically. (*See RFP: 8.0 Submissions of Proposals*)

6.3 Experiences on similar assignments.

6.3.1 Provide the names, physical and electronic addresses, and telephone numbers of a minimum of three (3) clients for whom the proposer has conducted similar services. The AOC may check references listed by the proposer.

- 6.3.2 Proposal includes examples of other qualitative research projects.
- 6.3.3 Proposer has demonstrated experience with qualitative research related to the functioning of the court.
- 6.3.4 References are provided for similar types of prior work, including data collection, data entry, and database management.
- 6.3.5 Proposer has experience working in a Court or related setting [desirable but not necessary].
- 6.4 Reasonableness of cost projections. See below, *RFP: 7.0 Specifics of a Responsive Cost Proposal*.
- 6.5 Ability to meet timing requirements to complete the Project. Overall plan with time estimates for completion of all work required.

7.0 SPECIFICS OF A RESPONSIVE COST PROPOSAL

The following information shall be included as the cost portion of the proposal:

- 7.1 Reasonableness of Cost Projections.
 - 7.1.1 As a separate document, submit a detailed line item budget showing total cost of the services for each of the four (4) Deliverables specified in *Attachment 2 Contract Terms, Exhibit D - Work to be Performed*. This budget should identify unique hourly rates, titles, and responsibilities for each “Key Personnel,” but can group this information for other personnel in a more general manner. Staff rates should be fully burdened, including indirect costs, overhead and profit. The cost proposal should also include separate line items for travel and lodging, and for focus group costs including space rental, food, and incentives for non-professional participants. Fully explain and justify all budget line items in a narrative entitled “Budget Justification.”
 - 7.1.2 The total cost for consultant services will range between \$45,000.00 - \$50,000.00, inclusive of personnel, materials, overhead rates, travel and profit. The method of payment to the consultant will be by cost reimbursement for each of the four (4) deliverables, including travel costs, specified in *Attachment 2 Contract Terms, Exhibit D - Work to be Performed*.

8.0 SUBMISSIONS OF PROPOSALS

- 8.1 Responsive proposals should provide straightforward, concise information that satisfies the requirements noted in items *RFP: 6.0 Specifics of a Responsive Technical Proposal*

and *RFP: 7.0 Specifics of a Responsive Cost Proposal*, above. Expensive bindings, color displays, and the like are not necessary or desired. Emphasis should be placed on conformity to the state's instructions, requirements of this RFP, and completeness and clarity of content.

- 8.2 Proposers will submit **one (1) original and three (3) copies** of the technical proposal and cost proposal signed by an authorized representative of the company, including name, title, address, and telephone number of one individual who is the responder's designated representative.
- 8.3 Proposals must be delivered to the individual listed under Submission of Proposals, as set forth on the cover memo of this RFP.
- 8.4 Only written responses will be accepted. Responses should be sent by registered or certified mail or by hand delivery.
- 8.5 In addition to submittal of the original and three copies of the proposals, as set forth in items 8.2, above, proposers are also required to submit an electronic version of the entire proposal on **CD-ROM**.

9.0 RIGHTS

The AOC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, as well as the right to issue similar RFPs in the future. This RFP is in no way an agreement, obligation, or contract and in no way is the AOC or the State of California responsible for the cost of preparing the proposal. One copy of a submitted proposal will be retained for official files and becomes a public record.

10.0 ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

It may be necessary to interview prospective service providers to clarify aspects of their submittal. If conducted, interviews will likely be conducted by telephone conference call. The AOC will notify prospective service providers regarding the interview arrangements.

11.0 CONFIDENTIAL OR PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The Administrative Office of the Courts policy is to follow the intent of the California Public Records Act (PRA). If a vendor's proposal contains material noted or marked as confidential and/or proprietary that, in the AOC's sole opinion, meets the disclosure exemption requirements of the PRA, then that information will not be disclosed pursuant to a request for public documents. If the AOC does not consider such material to be exempt from disclosure under the PRA, the material will be made available to the public, regardless of the notation or markings. If a vendor is unsure if its confidential and/or proprietary material meets the disclosure exemption requirements of the PRA, then it should not include such information in its proposal.