



UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

AMENDMENT NO. 2 TO SOLICITATION

TO: ALL VENDORS

FROM: Charles Johnson, Procurement Manager

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION NUMBER: USC-RFP-3073-CJ

DESCRIPTION: Exclusive Agent for the Operation of the University of South Carolina Class Ring Program

DATE: February 1, 2017

This Amendment No. 2 modifies the Request for Proposals only in the manner and to the extent as stated herein.

Vendor Questions and Answers

BIDDER SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF AMENDMENT NO. 2 IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW AND RETURN IT WITH THEIR BID RESPONSE. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT BID TO REJECTION.

Authorized Signature

Name of Offeror

Date

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR A

Question #1: What is the Pennyweight of the Men's and Women's 10k Gold Rings?

ANSWER:

Men's 12.272, women's signet 5.104, women's small 3.4, women's petite 2.3, women's pendant 2.5.

Question #2: There appears to be 5 different style numbers in the RFP. How many rings are included in the Official Ring Program?

ANSWER:

One men's size, three women's sizes and one pendant.

Question #3: Are all ring sizes for Men and Women priced the same?

ANSWER:

See the pricing listed in the RFP. Pricing also depends on quality of metal and options added to the ring

Question #4: How are royalties calculated for each quality style and ring size?

ANSWER:

The same royalty rate applies to all metal qualities and styles.

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR B

Question #1: On page 15, #2, you requested ring samples equal to the weight requirements of the current official rings. Please provide the current penny weight of the USC official rings in the various metal types and sizes requested.

ANSWER:

Men's 12.272, women's signet 5.104, women's small 3.4, women's petite 2.3, women's pendant 2.5.

Question #2: Can you provide documentation on how many students attended the actual ring ceremony in 2015-2016? 2014-2015? 2013-2014? 2012-2011?

ANSWER:

2011: Spring: 112 Fall: 202

2012: Spring: 129 Fall: 216

2013: Spring: 145 Fall: 292

2014: Spring: 216 Fall: 372
2015: Spring: 223 Fall: 341
2016: Spring: 310 Fall: 519

Question #3: Please provide a list of the decision makers who will make the final determination for the USC Ring program and their titles.

ANSWER:

The Evaluation Committee will evaluate the proposals to determine the highest ranked offer. Then the Procurement Officer will award the contract.

Question #4: You state that if desired the offeror can list how they would improve on the marketing plan. Please provide a detail list of the current type of marketing being used to market to students, alumni and parents to enhance USC's official ring program. What types of media are being used and frequency?

ANSWER:

Current vendor works with Alumni Association to advertise and market students about the ring.

- Mailer is sent to students in fall and spring announcing upcoming Ring Week's and Save the Dates for Ring Ceremony
- Multiple emails are sent to eligible students announcing the upcoming Ring Week's
- Flyers are posted around campus announcing the Ring Week
- Garnet Circle student alumni group advertise on campus and promote Ring Week and Ring Ceremony
- Social media is used heavily to advertise Ring Week's and Ring Ceremony
 - o Instagram
 - o Twitter
 - o Facebook
 - o Snapchat

Question #5: What key marketing initiatives are currently being used to build affinity to students, alumni and parents to the official ring program?

ANSWER:

Drive traffic to get students and alumni to buy the Carolina Ring.

- Traditions
- Social media campaigns
 - o Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, Snap Chat
- Revamped mailing and emails
- Creation of video from Ring Ceremony
- Advertise in U of SC staff mailings
- Added to U of SC parents newsletter
- Discounted price of Carolina ring to My Carolina Student Network 4 year members

Question #6: What key factors make you open to forming a new partnership?

ANSWER:

Please review the RFP – Proposal Contents.

Question #7: What is the current warranty on rings?

ANSWER:

The current warranty guarantees the ring to be free from defects in workmanship or materials, and any such defects discovered upon delivery will be remedied at no charge.

Question #8: What are the strongest traditions around the current ORP program?

ANSWER:

Please review the RFP – Proposal Contents.

Question #9: Will there be an opportunity for a presentation? If no, please explain how you plan to fully evaluate what a new partnership has to offer without evaluating the actual support, creative ideas and success behind the organization?

ANSWER:

Please review the RFP – Proposal Contents.

Question #10: What is the metal Celestrium? What is the composition of Celestrium?

ANSWER:

Celestrium is a trademark of a type of an austenitic stainless steel used in jewelry. It resembles white gold, but is cheaper and more durable. Celestrium is strong and comparable to a fine jeweler's nonprecious material. It polishes to a brilliant silver luster and is known for its strength, resistance to chemical reaction and ease of maintenance. The same or similar alloys are marketed as white Ultrium, in particular when used for class rings.

Question #11: On page 45 you list the rings sales by metal quality. There are sales listed for BPS, what is BPS? Please list the metal description and composition for BPS.

ANSWER:

Balfour Premium Silver™. Two white metals – silver and palladium.

Question #12: Licensing fees affect the commissions paid out by any provider and affect pricing discounts that can be maximized on rings. What is the current licensing fees being paid on the USC ORP rings?

ANSWER:

Each offeror must propose a dollar amount of commission on each ring sold and an overall commission guarantee. For Year 1 of the contract term, the per ring commission will be a minimum of \$ 240 per ring, and will increase by 3% a year in each subsequent year of the contract term. The total minimum guaranteed ring commission for Year 1 of the contract term will be \$ 416,000, and will increase by 3% a year in each subsequent year of the contract term. This minimum commission will be paid to the University regardless of the numbers of ring that are actually sold. Offerors are encouraged to offer both higher commissions and higher annual guarantees than those stated above. Each offeror must include a completed Financial Proposal found in Section VII of the solicitation in its Business Proposal.

There is also a \$ 10.00 per ring royalty as part of the commission due to the Collegiate Licensing Company on behalf of the University of South Carolina.