



# UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

AMENDMENT NO. 1 TO SOLICITATION

TO: ALL VENDORS

FROM: Caleisha Hayes, Procurement Manager

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION NUMBER: USC-RFP-3315-CH

DESCRIPTION: UNDERGRADUATE ADMISSIONS STUDENT SEARCH FULFILLMENT & RAPID RESPONSE PROGRAM

DATE: June 14, 2018

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This Amendment No. 1 modifies the Request for Proposal only in the manner and to the extent as stated herein.

Vendor Questions and Answers

Section II. Instructions to Offerors – A. General Information has been modified.

Section VII. Terms and Conditions – B. General has been modified.

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OFFERORS SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF AMENDMENT NO. 1 IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW AND RETURN IT WITH THEIR RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT THE RESPONSE TO THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TO REJECTION.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Offeror

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**USC-RFP-3315-CH**

**THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR A:**

1. "Contractor must provide real-time market analysis throughout each campaign in order to make recommendations to improve results." How does the University define "real-time?" Please define "market."

***ANSWER: "Real-time" is defined as on a regularly scheduled agreed-upon basis throughout the campaign (i.e weekly or monthly analysis reports). "Market" is defined as the environment in which we are recruiting students. This may include geographic, socio-economic, or ability level of students.***

2. We understand the University's goal is to increase its number of freshman applications and its enrollment of qualified students. Please provide additional context for those goals (e.g., are the goals related to ratings and rankings, class shaping, etc.?).

***ANSWER: The goal is to increase the size of the freshman class, increase African-American enrollment, improve profile as measured by average SAT and ACT score, and maintain in-state and out-of-state residency ratio close to 51% SC and 49% OOS.***

3. What are the university's first-year enrollment goals for Fall 2019? 2020? 2021? 2022? 2023?

***ANSWER: The University's goal is to have 6,000 students in the freshman class by Fall 2021. For fall 2018, we anticipate a class of 5,800. We would like to grow this number by 50-75 students per year until we reach 6,000 for 2021. Enrollment goals post 2021 have not been determined.***

***As it relates to this campaign, the Contractor should guarantee rates of response for Student Search that are equal to or greater than 10%. This is a three-year average of the national search response average as reported collectively in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 editions of College and University Admission and Enrollment Management Practices for Undergraduate Freshman Inquiry Generation, as presented by Edward M. Gillis at the Harvard Summer Institute on College Admissions.***

4. Is the University currently searching specific market segments, such as Pell Eligible, Honors, specific majors, etc.? If not, is the University interested in enrolling particular market segments? Please provide specifics.

***ANSWER: We currently search by market segments based on geographic region and ability. We have three ability groups as defined by score bands (Honors, Capstone, Regular). We have various geographic segments with SC being our "primary" segment and then other states being secondary, tier I, tier II, etc. We also search by racial category to identify African-American students.***

5. Please provide inquiry, application/completed application, admit, and enrollment trends over the last 2-3 enrollment cycles for freshmen.

**ANSWER: Fall 2017 - 105,000 (inquiries), 26,000 (applications), 18,770 (admits), 6,386 (deposits), 5,870 (enrolled)**  
**Fall 2018 - 129,000 (inquiries), 31,000 (applications), 19,400 (admits), 6,229 (deposits), anticipated class size 5,800 (which was goal)**

6. What is the university's current collection rate of parent's name and email address?

**ANSWER: We currently capture pre-application parent email addresses for 25% of inquiries. We require a parent email address once a student has applied.**

7. With the success USC has experienced, what are you looking for in a new provider?

**ANSWER: We are looking for a vendor who can continue to refine and improve upon our search strategy. We want to use data to ensure we are targeting the right students through search. Additionally, we are looking for a vendor who has a track record of success and can ensure an above-average search inquiry rate (as defined in the RFP).**

## **THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE RECEIVED FROM VENDOR B:**

8. Is the University of South Carolina providing list access to CBSS, NRCCUA, PSAT, SAT, ACT EOS through the CollegeBoard data, or will those need to be secured on the behalf of USC by the awardee of this RFP?

**ANSWER: The Offeror must propose and make recommendations as to which names should be purchased via CBSS, NRCCUA, PSAT, ACT, SAT. The successful Offeror manages the selection of the students and the list buying. USC pays for the list purchases.**

9. Is there an existing email database that can be used for lookalike targeting?

**ANSWER: USC Admissions has a CRM which contains all student inquiries for the upcoming years. However, search is intended to generate new inquiries so there is not an email database for use. We do have sample communication and emails that are available to use for better knowledge of branding and tone in communication.**

10. Will potential landing pages need to be built on their current CMS or web development stack or would they live separate from the main website and could be built statically or on Wordpress?

**ANSWER: All landing pages would need to be built separately and would live separate from the main USC website.**

11. Would the awardee have direct contact with USC's web department?

**ANSWER: The Contractor will have direct contact with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions Marketing Department. This includes our web developers.**

12. Is hosting provided through the current website infrastructure or would any new landing pages need to provide their own hosting services?

**ANSWER: *Hosting is not available through current website infrastructure.***

13. Will the RFP be awarded in its entirety to one vendor or will some services be broken out to multiple vendors?

**ANSWER: *See provision entitled "Award to One Offeror" on page 24 of the RFP.***

14. Are there any current preferred vendor partners for the University of South Carolina? - Printers, SMS providers, web hosting companies, email systems?

**ANSWER: *No.***

15. Who was the previous marketing provider for USC's Office of Undergraduate Admissions?

**ANSWER: *EAB/Royall and Company***

16. What key attributes are most important in a partner?

**ANSWER: *Knowledge of the industry as it relates to student search and a proven track record of securing inquiries via student search.***

17. How would USC define a high value student? – ACT scores – SAT scores – community service – GPA, etc.

**ANSWER: *Students who meet admissions criteria based on standardized test scores and high school grade point average.***

18. Are there specific characteristics for parents (geo, demo, HHI, etc.) that have led to success in the past?

**ANSWER: *Our focus is on targeting students, so we focus on the geography and ability level of students.***

19. What geo do the majority of enrolled USC students come from?

**ANSWER: *Top 10 States for Enrolled Students: South Carolina, North Carolina, New Jersey, Virginia, Maryland, Georgia, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, Ohio***

**<http://ipr.sc.edu/factbook/2017/columbia/newfres.htm>**

20. What key markets have you focused on for targeted advertising historically?

**ANSWER: *We focus in all of our primary markets:***

- |                         |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| · <i>South Carolina</i> | · <i>North Carolina</i> | · <i>Georgia</i>       |
| · <i>New Jersey</i>     | · <i>Virginia</i>       | · <i>Maryland</i>      |
| · <i>Pennsylvania</i>   | · <i>New York</i>       | · <i>Massachusetts</i> |

· Florida  
· Illinois  
· Tennessee

· Ohio  
· California

· Connecticut  
· Texas

21. What percentage of first year admitted students are from somewhere other than the United States?

**ANSWER:** <1%

22. Are there specific majors or focus areas that are higher priority and/or drive in most first-year and transfer students?

**ANSWER:** *No. We are looking to recruit students for all majors so we have a good representation.*

23. How large is the first-year student enrollment and total enrollment?

**ANSWER:** *Fall 2017: 5870 (first-year); 26,362 (undergraduates); 34,731 (total headcount)*

24. Do you have a current CRM system/ESP/marketing automation system?

**ANSWER:** *Yes, we use Slate, a Technolutions product.*

25. Are there specific enrollment goals or campaign objectives associated with this opportunity?

**ANSWER:** *Refer to Question #3.*

26. What is the anticipated budget associated with this RFP or, if not established, prior year's budget?

**ANSWER:** *The cost for these services in the 2016-2017 year was \$496,319. Offerors should present their best price in the Business Proposal.*

27. Is there existing consumer research available for review if we are to be awarded the contract?

**ANSWER:** *We have market research and reports we are able to share with the Contractor. However, we are seeking a Contractor who has developed an understanding of the market via consumer research prior to awarding the contract.*

28. Page 16: "The University's current unique contact quantity is approximately 260,000." Does this mean that within the past calendar year USC reached out to 260k prospective students and parents?

**ANSWER:** *This is the number of prospective students we currently contact through our search provider in a given calendar year.*

29. Is any insurance description or proof required in the RFP submission or just within 10 days upon contract award?

**ANSWER:** *See provisions entitled “Information for Offerors to Submit – General” in Section IV. (Information for Offerors to Submit) and “Contractor’s Liability Insurance – General” in Section VII. (Terms and Conditions – A. General) of the RFP.*

30. What key characteristics of student quality and locations have helped hone in in the past on International recruits that best fit USC?

**ANSWER:** *We have not done a great deal of marketing to International students. Instead, we rely on those who appear to meet admission criteria based on standardized test scores.*

31. Will there be opportunity if awarded RFP to review historical best practices and data in order to make the best action plan possible? Will any pricing adjustments based on this new information be allowed?

**ANSWER:** *We will grant the Contractor access to our admissions data in order for them to conduct analysis and recommend the best course of action. Some price adjustments may be allowed. Anticipated price adjustments should be outlined in proposal.*

## **THIS CONCLUDES THE VENDOR QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES.**

### **Section II. Instructions to Offerors – A. General Information has been revised/modified as follows:**

The provision “IRAN DIVESTMENT ACT - CERTIFICATION (JAN 2015)” is DELETED in its entirety.

### **Section VII. Terms and Conditions – A. General has been revised/modified as follows:**

The provision “IRAN DIVESTMENT ACT – ONGOING OBLIGATIONS (JAN 2015)” is DELETED in its entirety.