

**PUBLIC INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION SERVICES (PICS)
NIH - TASK ORDER**

RFTOP# 202

TITLE: Writing/Analysis Support for the DCLG Online Facilitated Dialogue

PART I – REQUEST FOR TASK ORDER (TO) PROPOSALS

A. POINT OF CONTACT NAME: Elisabeth Handley

Phone: 301-402-5575

Fax: 301-480-7558

Proposal Address:

6116 Executive Blvd., Room 220
Rockville, MD 20852

Billing Address:

Accounts Payable, OFM, NIH
Bldg. 31; Rm. B1B39
Bethesda, MD 20892-2045

B. PROPOSED PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Eighteen months from date of award (target date of award is September, 2004). The award will be renewable for up to four option years. Proposals will not be evaluated based on this possible additional work.

C. PRICING METHOD

Labor Hour. Please propose a fully loaded fixed hourly rate for your proposed individual. Also propose minimum and maximum number of hours per week. Currently available funding for this project is limited to \$87,000. The budget may be expanded as necessary either before or upon renewal of the task order for the four option years, as needed. A firm that is able to complete this project for less than that amount is invited to propose a lower price for the successful execution of this task. If a firm determines that the budget amount is insufficient, they should advise how best to spend this amount and how much more is required to fully meet the objectives. Price will be a consideration in the determination of the firm that is selected for award.

D. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to the above POC. Proposals should not exceed 20 pages (excluding resumes, references, and writing samples).

E. RESPONSE DUE DATE

Proposals due **August 6, 2004** at 10:00 AM local NIH time.

F. TASK DESCRIPTION:

BACKGROUND

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), one of eight agencies that compose the Public Health Service (PHS) in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). In order to accomplish its mission to reduce the burden of cancer morbidity and mortality, and ultimately to prevent the disease, NCI supports a broad range of programs in basic and clinical biomedical and behavioral research and training. These include programs to understand the causes of cancer; prevent, detect, diagnose, treat, and control cancer; and disseminate information to the practitioner, patient and public.

In carrying out these programs, the NCI divisions and offices frequently work with consumer advocacy organizations, scientific and professional societies, and other Federal agencies. The Office of Liaison Activities (OLA) was established in 1996 to serve as the central point of contact at NCI for these key constituents of NCI. The office is responsible for communicating, cooperating, and collaborating with these groups to promote common goals. OLA supports programs that involve consumer advocates in NCI programs and planning. One of them is the Director's Consumer Liaison Group (DCLG), which is an all-consumer advisory body that was established in December of 1997.

The Director's Consumer Liaison Group is a federally chartered advisory board that makes recommendations to the Director of NCI from the consumer advocate perspective on a wide variety of issues, programs, and research priorities. The DCLG consists of 15 consumer advocates who are involved in cancer advocacy. They reflect the diversity among those whose lives are affected by cancer. DCLG members are appointed for two, three-year or four-year terms. DCLG members meet twice a year in the Washington, D.C. area and through multiple telephone conferences.

There are three purposes of the DCLG. First, they develop and establish processes, mechanisms, and criteria for identifying appropriate consumer advocates to serve on a variety of program and policy advisory committees responsible for advancing the mission of the NCI. Second, they serve as a primary forum to discuss issues and concerns and exchanges viewpoints that are important to the broad development of NCI program and research priorities. Lastly, they establish and maintain strong collaboration between NCI and the cancer advocacy community to reach common goals.

In a recent survey of the Cancer Advocacy Community (CAC), 54% of respondents said that the DCLG should focus on enhancing collaboration between NCI and the community. In response to the survey and in order to accomplish this, NCI and the DCLG created the DCLG Working Group to Facilitate Dialogue. The working group proposes several ways for the DCLG to expand collaboration and communication, one of which is related to this contract.

A contractor is needed to summarize comments submitted by the CAC on a pilot Web site. The Web site will facilitate dialogue with the cancer advocacy community – one section will allow NCI/DCLG to present topics for comment on by cancer advocacy organizations, and the other will be a site where individual members of the Public can comment on the same topic. This Web

site will become an online community for advocates and NCI to exchange information and perspective and will be a vital part of NCI's ongoing dialogue with advocates. In both areas of the Web site, DCLG will play a vital role in the dialogue. A contractor is needed to summarize comments made on this pilot Web site by cancer advocacy organizations. Comments made by individual members of the Public will not be summarized at this time.

This pilot Web site will enable ongoing transparent, democratic, moderated conversations between CAC organizations and NCI on issues of mutual importance. The Web site will feature topic statements (e.g., draft strategy documents, issues, questions) posted by NCI for comment by members of registered advocacy organizations. When NCI posts a topic for feedback, cancer advocacy organizations will have a period of time (generally four weeks) to submit their comments. Submissions will be made in a transparent manner in that members of the Public can view them.

All comments posted by registered cancer advocacy organizations will be available for viewing by the Public, and the contractor, as they are posted. (Posts with language that is defamatory, obscene, offensive, profane, and not germane to the Active Discussion will be removed by a web moderator.) At the end of the predetermined comment period all comments will be forwarded to the contractor by NCI. The contractor should propose and justify the minimum number of days in which the contractor will create the summary of comments posted by registered cancer advocacy organizations on an individual topic. At a maximum, the contractor should propose 10 business days from receipt of all comments to create a summary and forward it to NCI for review. Creating a rapid and efficient process is very important; firms will be judged on their ability to deliver a quality document in a prompt manner. If a firm determines that 10 business days presents an insurmountable deadline, they should propose a different timeline that will be required to fully meet the objectives.

All versions of all summaries submitted to NCI for review should be quality-controlled by the contractor prior to submission to NCI. We expect that spelling and grammar errors, inaccuracies, and any other factual errors will be corrected prior to submission to NCI. All summaries should be clear, concise, and transparent. This editing process should be built into the initial (maximum) 10-business-day timeline proposed by the contractor to submit a draft summary to NCI.

The process for creating the summary should emphasize the transparent process of feedback established by this Web site. Cancer advocacy organizations and members of the Public should be able to clearly see the links between the comments posted by the cancer advocacy organizations and the resulting summary.

The Project Officer and specified members of the DCLG will be allowed 3-5 business days to propose first-round revisions of the summary to the contractor. The contractor will then provide a revised summary 2 business days after receiving the first-round revisions from the Project Officer and members of the DCLG. The Project Officer will then provide second-round revisions and will post the final summary to the Web site. Additional revisions by the contractor, prior to NCI posting the final summary on the Web site, may be needed on an intermittent basis. Turn-around time for additional revisions should be no more than 2 – 3 days.

NCI will respond on the pilot Web site within a period of time (such as one to three months) with a statement that explains what actions NCI will (or will not) take as a result of the feedback summarized by the contractor. The contractor will not be responsible for this part of the process.

The second section of the Web site is where the Public could discuss the same questions posed to advocacy organizations (on the first section). This site will be where more informal conversations and exchanges might take place. This part of the Web site will also allow the DCLG and NCI to “take the pulse” of the community at large by observing the transparent, uncensored and democratic nature of the online discussion.

No registration will be required to read messages in either forum; both will be open to public browsing. However, registration will be required in order to post messages or to receive e-mail notifications of new material posted in the forums.

For the first part of the Web site, eligible advocacy organizations will register to participate in discussions. Initially, these will consist of the approximately 150 advocacy organizations that were surveyed by the DCLG and NCI in 2003. Later, NCI will establish a mechanism to increase the number of organizations that are eligible to participate. It is currently estimated that each of the 150 advocacy organizations will post up to 3 comments for a total of 450 comments for every statement posted by NCI. For the first year, the total number of statements that will be posted is anticipated to be 1 statement each month for a total of 12 statements. The number of statements posted may fluctuate. Thus, there may be fewer comments to review in any one month.

A contractor is needed for the first section of the pilot facilitating dialogue Web site whose audience is advocacy organizations. The contractor will be responsible for reading, reviewing, categorizing and summarizing the comments provided by all parties. Initial summaries must include, but not be limited to:

- an executive summary ranging from 1 to 3 pages in length,
- quantification into the most appropriate major summary categories in order to classify comments in the aggregate,
- recommended actions derived from the postings, and
- a summary of any queries NCI should address in responding to the postings.

To see the Web site in test form, visit <http://dialog.cancer.gov>. Please do not share this URL the Web site is undergoing testing.

Task Description:

The purpose of this Task Order is to obtain contract support for the NCI and the DCLG, so the comments made to the pilot Web site where advocacy organizations respond to NCI issues are analyzed and summarized so that they can be digested by NCI staff and advocates alike. The scope of this task is for one individual (and a backup) with sufficient experience that s/he does not require extensive oversight from additional staff members in the vendor’s organization.

The Contractor will be responsible for the following:

- Reading, analyzing and categorizing comments posted to the Facilitated Dialogue web site (In the future, it is possible that comments might be summarized for the other Web site where the Public can comment, but this would be accomplished through a contract modification).
- Writing summaries of the comments for NCI staff to review.
- Incorporating feedback from the NCI project officer and a DCLG member and making up to three revisions (as necessary), with a minimum of 1 revision made by the contractor.
- Preparing a final summary.

Qualifications

The Contractor must have the following minimum qualifications:

- Strong writing skills
- Ability to evaluate comments and effectively abstract main points into a clearly written summary
- Familiarity with the cancer advocacy community
- A Master's degree or equivalent work experience in public health, health communication, or related field

G. EVALUATION FACTORS

Evaluation Criteria

Technical Proposal: (30 points) The vendor demonstrates a clear understanding of the requirements and tasks in this SOW and provides a clear statement of how they will be performed.

Proposed Personnel and Quality of Work: (35 points) Submit the credentials for each individual proposed to complete the required work. Each proposal should include information on the aforementioned qualifications and the following evaluation criteria: relevant experience, education/training, familiarity with analysis and written reviews, and quality and depth of experience on similar projects. Each firm should supply a writing sample for the proposed personnel who will be writing the summary, using the proposed technique for writing the summary.

Price and Timeline: (35 points) Price will be an important evaluation factor. Proposed prices will be considered in determining the firm that represents the best value to the Government. The vendor should submit a budget table indicating the proposed contractor(s) to complete the tasks as well as hourly pay rates for the 18-month initial period of performance. Firms will be judged on their ability to deliver a quality document in a prompt manner. Firms should submit a proposed timeline to create the summary and incorporate (at a minimum) 1 round of revisions from the Project Officer and specified DCLG members.

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PART II - CONTRACTOR'S REPLY: CONTRACT # _____

Contractor:

Points of Contact:

Phone-

Fax-

Address:

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:

Pricing Method: LH

TOTAL ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOURS:

PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE:

FOR THE CONTRACTOR: _____

Signature

Date

SOURCE SELECTION:

WE HAVE REVIEWED ALL SUBMITTED PROPOSALS HAVE DETERMINED THIS FIRM SUBMITTED THE BEST OVERALL PROPOSAL AND THE PRICE/COST IS REASONABLE.

Billing Reference # _____

Appropriations Data: _____

RECOMMENDED:

FAX #

Signature - Project Officer

Date

APPROVED: _____

FAX #

Signature - Contracting Officer

Date

NIH APPROVAL -

CONTRACTOR SHALL NOT EXCEED THE ESTIMATED LABOR HOURS OR ESTIMATED TASK ORDER AMOUNT WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACTING OFFICER & PICS COORDINATOR

APPROVED: _____

FAX 301-402-3407

Signature – Larry Manning, NIH-PICS Coordinator

Date