Bidder’s Conversation-March 5, 2021

Q1. Are references to be submitted with the application response or afterwards?

A: References should be submitted with your proposal as referenced on Page 3, Section 4A, Item 4 of the RFP. SPLC may request additional references should you become a finalist, but will not contact any of your references without your knowledge.

Q2. Is SPLC thinking about inviting prospects from the academic sector as opposed to the practitioners? Is SPLC interested in presentations that bring strengths from both an academic and practitioner approach?

A: All sectors are invited to submit proposals. SPLC is not limiting respondents to one sector and welcomes cross-sector approaches and proposals. Yes, SPLC is open to viewing presentations that bring strengths from both the academic and practitioner approach. However, presentations should represent the expertise and work that respondents believe can add value to the proposed work with regard to the regional and environmental scan. SPLC encourages the presentation to be as vast as possible. Please refer to Page 2, Section 2 “Who May Respond” for detailed information on who is invited to respond.

Q3. How does SPLC interact with local government? How does this network of partners (city, county, school districts, and state level) integrate into SPLC work? How is this valued?

A: SPLC currently works with legislators and people throughout government in various ways. SPLC has a Policy Department that works with our legal and other organizational departments to engage with legislatures and government officials to advocate on behalf of policies that we believe are beneficial to the people and communities we serve, and to fight against those we believe are harmful. SPLC is open to and hopes to move into the community, city, and county levels to influence policy in the same way that it does at the state and national level.

Q4. Will SPLC allow respondents to include student interns as a part of their research teams, or should applicants focus instead on the lead researchers?

A: Student interns are welcome. It is critical, however, that respondents make sure the resume of their primary research lead is included. If student researchers are included, respondents are encouraged to frame up the qualifications you seek from those students. Respondents are also asked to provide why you are adding student researchers, and how this may add to the quality of your proposal.
Q5. When looking at the timeline in the RFP, it appears that there is about 6 weeks to complete the project. Is this timeline correct?

A: The 6-week timeline is an estimate, but SPLC is open to shortening or extending the timeline based on reviewing the proposals and better understanding various approaches to the project. The 6-week timeline is primarily driven by wanting to get started right away, but it is not written in stone.

Q6. How can respondents tap into the existing network and/or partnerships that SPLC has in the state?

A: SPLC will share this information with the successful respondent, while being flexible with how this information is distilled. This will be a partnership and you will have access to our staff, especially those based in our Jackson, Mississippi office.

Q7. Is SPLC expecting respondents to move up the analytical chain when it says in the RFP that it is interested in the primary drivers?

A: SPLC recommends that respondents be as creative and innovative as they can be in bringing new insights to the challenges faced by the people of Mississippi and employ a “both/and” approach when considering conducting its analysis.

Q8. How specific and detailed are respondents expected be in their recommendations?

A: SPLC encourages very specific, bold, and detailed recommendations. The more vague a proposal is, the less successful that proposal will be.

Q9. Is there a way to share the affiliations of bidders on this zoom call?

A: Names and affiliations are located in the zoom chat. Additionally, SPLC will provide the name and email addresses of attendees.

Q10. Is there a range or bandwidth on budget for this RFP?

A: There is no established budget because SPLC does not want to limit respondents’ creativity in responding to this RFP. However, SPLC is not expecting a $1 million proposal or a $25,000 proposal. SPLC is asking respondents to be creative, yet responsible when responding so that their respective budgets tie accordingly to their proposed work plan.