



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-CORPUS CHRISTI

PURCHASING DEPARTMENT 6300 OCEAN DRIVE
CORPUS CHRISTI, TX 78412

RFP Number:

RFP2-0001

**Branding Strategy and Work Plan for Harte Research Institute for Gulf of
Mexico Studies**

Addendum # 1

The University has received the following questions from vendors. The corresponding department has provided answers for the questions provided within the allocated time to respond. The questions and answers should be considered incorporated as part of this Request for Proposals. Please see below:

1. Question: Who are the decision makers/evaluation committee for this project? Will the A&M Corpus Christi marketing department be involved?

Answer: We have selected an Evaluation Committee of stakeholders for the evaluation of this project. Marketing & Communications department will play a consultative role.
2. Question: In reference to page 5 (#3), what types of agreements or arrangements would HRI be looking for?

Answer: Vendors should make known agreements that would provide synergy to the bidder for the requested brand identity.
3. Question: What specific deliverables will come from Section 2.4 (A. Brand Identity) on page 5?

Answer: Strategic brief and work plan that will define goals, objectives, audiences, and recommendations on how we may evolve our brand strategy. However, others may be identified by the proposer.
4. Question: Would HRI like research to be included in this project? If yes, what type?

Answer: Yes, at a minimum, market research to include comparative research institutes and respective social messaging.

5. Question: Has there been any previous research done as it relates to this project? If yes, can we have access to it?

Answer: Not done previously

6. Question: Can HRI describe their target audiences?

Answer: Current stakeholders (natural resource management agencies, funders, science community) in the Gulf region but would like to explore the possibility of opening that up to the broader public.

7. Question: Why has HRI decided to do this project?

Answer: To refresh the image and solidify the brand of Harte Research Institute. To increase the impact of the science performed and ensure the message is directed at the proper stakeholders.

8. Question: What does HRI hope an improved branding strategy will do for the institute? Why is this a priority?

Answer: It is HRI's expectation that a strong brand will increase the impact of the science performed and ensure the message is directed at the proper stakeholders. It may provide different audiences to know about HRI's work and eventually support it. We have also been referred to the "best kept secret"

9. Question: Can you elaborate on what you mean by "Branding Plan"? Do you mean a communications plan?

Answer: Broadly meaning: Look, communications, timing, audience

10. Question: Is creative execution/production part of this scope of work?

Answer: It's anticipated that this scope of work will inform future execution/production.

11. Question: What is the target audience and geography focus for the institute?

Answer: Current stakeholders (natural resource management agencies, funders, science community) in the U.S. Gulf region - but starting with Texas - and would like to explore the possibility of opening that up to the broader public.

12. Question: What is the timeline to launch the new brand?

Answer: HRI anticipates 12-18 months from identification and contract execution with vendor

13. Question: When was the last time HRI worked on their branding strategy?

Answer: At inception of the institute (2001-2002).

14. Question: Is there an option to submit electronically given that some companies are still working remotely due to COVID-19?

Answer: No, although we do ask for digital copies, the bid must be submitted by mail or in person before the

deadline.

15. Question: Who are the primary targets for the Harte Research Institute (HRI)?

Answer: Current stakeholders (natural resource management agencies, funders, science community) and would like to explore the possibility of opening that up to the broader public.

16. Question: On page 5 (section 2.5) is this section asking that vendors provide Digital Branding samples that comply with accessibility standards?

Answer: Samples are not required (at vendor's option) but finished products must comply with the accessibility standards therefore any creative endeavors are asked to follow the standards.

17. Question: Section 6 Pricing & Delivery Schedules states that we should provide a schedule of fees for the "following services" and then the document is blank. Is there a specific list of deliverables/services that we should include in our pricing?

Answer: Please include pricing based on company policy. Are the services billed hourly, at the end of the project, or in a tier system? We need to know what is covered at each price point for budgeting purposes. The detailed price breakout should include all aspects of the project, and an estimate of total cost for the project. Section 6 of the RFP should state "Please provide a schedule of fees / flat rate for all services". Please also provide timeline of schedule.

18. Question: What is the budget for this initiative? Does it include hard costs or media?

Answer: Current budget is \$150k and may include hard cost and/or media, it is intended to be a multi-year collaboration with selected vendor and budget may be changed each year.

19. Question: What was your total budget for the last completed fiscal year for this effort/for a similar effort?

Answer: N/A

20. Question: Is there an incumbent vendor? Who is the incumbent vendor?

Answer: No

21. Question: What is the name of the advertising agency HRI has worked with regularly in the past?

Answer: All work has been done in house.

22. Question: Are there co-vendors for this effort? (e.g., PR, web development, marketing etc.)

Answer: Not currently. If vendor is bringing on co-vendors/sub-contractors, they need to be listed on the HSP.

23. Question: What partners do you have that participate/have participated in communication efforts?

Answer: None outside of the institute.

24. Question: What tactics do you consider to be the most successful in meeting your goals?

Answer: Continuous engagement with our stakeholder partners.

25. Question: What is your measurement of success?

Answer: For the branding initiative: Increase of social media followers, increased attendance at events, increased financial support by stakeholders. For our science and solutions: Bringing our science to the development and implementation of lasting solutions

26. Question: What are your key performance metrics?

Answer: For the Institute in order of importance: Engagement; training the next generation of natural resource scientist/manager/policy maker in the "HRI Model" (holistic approach – social+natural sciences); building the science and solutions enterprise (funding and publications)

27. Question: What is the priority of objectives?

Answer: For the Institute in order of importance: Engagement; training the next generation of natural resource scientist/manager/policy maker in the "HRI Model" (holistic approach – social+natural sciences); building the science and solutions enterprise (funding and publications)

28. Question: Are you open to using firms outside of Corpus Christi?

Answer: Yes

29. Question: What are HRI's current/past major campaigns? Which ones, if any, are continuing?

Answer: Currently at the beginning of a capital campaign

30. Question: What is HRI's current media mix? What was successful?

Answer: Traditional social media postings. Webpage. Posting of short videos on HRI's work that is made in house. HRI feels this is not unsuccessful but can definitely be improved and more strategic.

31. Question: Do you have a current brand guide? If yes, where can we find the most current version?

Answer: No

32. Question: Where can we view past campaign materials?

Answer: N/A

33. Question: What are the top three qualities HRI is looking for in an agency partner?
Answer: HRI values strong communication and openness. Evaluation criteria have been stated in the RFP.
34. Question: What does a successful brand identity look and feel like to the HRI team? We understand it has to comply with standards but what are your hopes for the visual identity work and what it might evoke?
Answer: Trust; a sense of adventure (we work in Mexico, Cuba, and beyond); approachable; innovative
35. Question: Imagine that it is 3 years after our work together is complete and that things are going really well for HRI. What's happened that makes you feel things are "going really well"? Describe a few key indicators or draft a short narrative that brings to life what success is looking and feeling like.
Answer: We are no longer the "best kept secret" and that there is deeper understanding of what HRI is and can do with our traditional stakeholder partners but that there is a more general awareness beyond that. This connection is really strong in Texas and has begun to bleed into the other Gulf states.
36. Question: Have you identified the audiences, internally & externally, that matter most to your success in attaining the desired future state you described above? Who will you have connected meaningfully with and why is that important? What new partnerships might you have?
Answer: Ideally we would like for partners and stakeholders that we haven't thought of working with before to think of teaming up with HRI to solve extremely challenging problems. What has made HRI unique is the transdisciplinary approach that we take but we need to continue to evolve that.
37. Question: Are there any other large strategic initiatives that the organization will be undergoing during this project lifespan? If so, what are they?
Answer: A capital campaign for HRI and TAMU-CC
38. Question: What is the budget of this branding project?
Answer: See above, not to exceed \$150k for the first year.
39. Question: Could you clarify whether the scope of this assignment pertains only to the development of a new brand identity or does this assignment also include the development of a new marketing strategy for the Harte Research Institute? And if so can you more specific as to what items need to have updated branding?
Answer: Development of a brand identity. A marketing strategy could be developed with the vendor in additional rounds of work. Updated branding for HRI as a whole that carries over into all social media, print material, gear, etc.
40. Question: We understand that the Harte Research Institute has recently undertaken a website redesign; how does this redesign project factor into the development of a new brand identity for the Institute, if at all?
Answer: Current redesign is going to be done in collaboration with the selected vendor. At this time only backend items are being updated for new technology and accessibility compliance.

41. Question: Are preliminary brand concepts or spec creative for the Harte Research Institute required for our proposal response?

Answer: No, will be done collaboratively.

42. Question: In the scope of work you state: "Vendor must identify the services and path it will provide to create brand identity, narrative, and tone including core messaging examples, strategic direction/plan, and visual elements". Can you be specific as to what brands and initiatives you are referring to? Is it a general campaign for the institution as a whole or can you identify the programs/initiatives you most want to highlight?

Answer: Yes, a general campaign for the institute as a whole for this period.

43. Question: Also in the scope of work you state: "Vendor must identify firms or entities with which it has agreements or arrangements in support of the branding initiative that could be made available for use by HRI." Are you referring to vendors such as video production or is this in reference to networking/public relations?

Answer: See above, identify those partnerships that would create synergy when partnering with the selected vendor. That could be video, networking, public relations, etc.

44. Question: Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer: Companies outside of the USA ARE QUALIFIED for consideration.

45. Question: Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Answer: Onsite meetings are not required if they can be successfully accomplished virtually.

46. Question: Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)

Answer: There is no requirement if it can be successfully accomplished.

47. Question: Can we submit the proposals via email?

Answer: No, the requirements of the RFP state that a hard copy be sent be physically delivered to TAMUCC Purchasing office located 6300 Ocean Dr., Purchasing Bldg., Rm #115, Corpus Christi, TX 78412

This document and attachments shall be attached to and become a part of the contract documents for this project. This addendum shall be signed for acknowledgement that you have received Addendum #1 and shall be returned with your proposal.

COMPANY NAME: _____

STREET ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE: _____

TELEPHONE AND FAX: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____