

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

PROJECT NO. RFP 18-22

**Sign Language Interpreter Services and Communication Access Real-Time Translation
(C.A.R.T) Services**

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS No. 002

Date: July 20, 2018

To: Prospective Respondents

From: Procurement Operations Department, Houston Community College

Subject: Questions and Answers Responses

Q1. The industry standard for interpreting services in this market is 1 hour of service minimum and 1 hour of travel/admin fee minimum for each request. Section 2 Price Proposal states "Hourly rate must be lump sum pricing including travel expenses." Will HCC be following this industry standard?

Response: No. Our research shows that there are many standards in the industry. Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q2. Section 2 - Price Proposal #4 Dedicated Staffing: Can you provide some clarification as to how you would like this presented. Without a specific student schedule or an estimate on monthly hours of service it would be difficult to create a schedule for staffing. This information would only be known by the incumbent vendor and the college. Perhaps we could get a sample schedule in an effort to prepare a more realistic staffing schedule?

Response: We are interested in knowing if a vendor has the capacity to handle the volume that we have. Please list all interpreters who would be available to interpret. Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q3. Section 2 - Price proposal #4 Dedicated staffing - When you say "hourly rate for each" in this section, do you mean for each interpreter? Would this be the same information from the Hourly Rate Schedule? Any further clarification would be appreciated.

Response: Hourly rate for services and hourly rate for each interpreter. Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q4. Pricing Proposal - a lump sum to include travel expenses. The industry standard in the Houston market is typically a minimum of 1 hour of service and 1 hour of travel (or administrative) time. My understanding from this RFP is that HCC is not agreeable to the industry standard 1 hour travel, is this accurate?

Response: Correct HCC is not agreeable to 1 hour of service for travel. Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q5. If HCC is not agreeable to the 1 hour travel. What is the service minimum to which HCC is agreeable?

Response: Service minimum is bill 2 hours. For travel, please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q6. What are your current service minimums and travel times under the agreement with the current vendor?

Response: Service minimum is bill 2 hours. Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q7. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Response: The college requires on-site interpreters. At this time, we are not ready to move to remote services as our sole source of providing interpreting services. However, the college is interested in learning more about remote services.

Q8. Can we submit the proposals via email?

Response: No.

Q9. If so, who is your current VRI provider?

Response: Not available.

Q10. Under Section 2.1 Video Remote Interpreting, (b) and (c) requires captioning services. Can you confirm that this is for CART captioning and not Video Remote Interpreting?

Response: 2.1 C should be omitted for VRI services.

Q11. Do the respondents have to apply for all the components, i.e., Interpreter Services and CART?

Response: No. Respondents may respond to all services CART, interpreting or remote, individually or all services.

Q12. If electing to apply for all 3 can they be in one proposal or separate proposals?

Response: One Proposal.

Q13. How would you like travel addressed?

Response: Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q14. Provide Caption Videos as required appears under VRI. Is that really intended as CART?

Response: 2.1 C should be omitted for VRI services.

Q15. May we provide CART remotely?

Response: No. but would like to learn more about these services.

Q16. Section 2.1 –
a. B) there is no line item for closed-captioning services and these are billed in a different manner than on-site or VRI services. Will you add a line item on the price proposal form for these services?
b. C) Please clarify the intent on this statement.

D) Will HCCS provide the equipment for Deaf consumers to utilize the VRI or remote CART services?

Response: We are not looking for closed captioning services. C should be omitted. HCC will not provide any equipment.

Q17. What is the estimated number of VRI minutes used in the past year, two years?

Response: None.

Q18. How many Deaf students did HCC have last year? Of those, how many were full-time students?

Response: This information is not available.

Q19. Does HCC have any Deaf staff who utilize the interpreting services? If so, how many?

Response: Occasionally the college requires these services for customers and staff. However, the primary focus of this RFP is for student's services.

Q20. Section 1 – Project Overview & Scope of Services, 2.4 The Interpreters and Captionists are required to contact the Supervisor of Interpreting Services if a student is a no-show. The interpreter or Captionists may be reassigned without additional costs as long as it is at the same location. Per the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Code of Professional Conduct (CPC), interpreters accept assignments with discretion, ensuring there is no ethical conflict with doing the particular assignment. Will the HCC add “as long as no valid ethical conflict exists” to the requirement?

Response: Yes.

Q21. Pre-proposal conference- Will a list of questions and answers from this conference be provided to all vendors?

Response: Included in these Q & A's.

Q22. 2.2 Requirements h) requires vendors to allow for schedule changes without charge to the college. However, industry standard requires vendors to pay the scheduled interpreter for many cancellations, and the scheduled interpreter may not be available for the new class time, forcing the vendor to assign and pay a separate interpreter. Can HCC change this to state, "except when the change causes a cancellation within the billable period"?

Response: Yes.

Q23. 2.4 No Shows requires interpreters to be available for replacement work if a consumer does not show. The interpreters ethical requirements state that they must accept assignments with discretion, meaning they cannot accept an assignment that poses an ethical conflict. Since there is a slight chance that moving from one request to another could present an ethical conflict (with the different consumer or setting) will HCC add, "as long as the replacement work does not pose a valid ethical conflict" to this requirement?

Response: Yes.

Q24. 2.12 Annual Spend Can HCC provide the historical annual hours for captioning of videos?

Response: We are not in need of captioning videos at this time.

Q25. Hourly Rate Schedule Can HCC clarify the purpose of having both a total cost and an hourly rate schedule, as they would seem to be in direct conflict with each other.

Response: Hourly rates should be rolled up to total cost based on the anticipated hours of services using the regular day hours.

Q26. 2.8 Certification: Copies of certification cards for all the interpreters required to do this amount of work would be bulky and consume reams of paper for each vendor. Can these copies be provided by the winning vendor so that HCC does not end up with piles of documentation that is redundant in nature?

Response: Yes, but HCC needs to know that the vendor has interpreters to staff assignments.

Q27. The solicitation makes it appear that CART and captioning of videos are synonymous. These services are priced completely differently (CART is priced by the hour and captioning of videos is priced by the minute). Can HCC add a section to the pricing for captioning of videos?

Response: We are not in need of captioning videos at this time.

Q28. On-site CART and remote CART are priced significantly differently. If HCC keeps just one option for CART pricing, they will be forced to pay the much higher on-site rates for remote services. Will HCC allow vendors to price these options separately?

Response: Yes, price them separately. The college is interested in learning more about remote CART services.

Q29. Hand Delivery of Proposals: In the interest of reducing our carbon footprint, we request that proposals be accepted via electronic means. This will save reams of paper and gallons of fuel that would otherwise be utilized to deliver the proposals. Please confirm if electronic format would be acceptable.

Response: No.

Q30. Due Date: With responses to questions not being expected until July 3rd and only two working days between that date and the current due date, will HCC allow more time for vendors to be able to review the answers and incorporate them into the vendor's response?

Response: Please refer to solicitation amendment # 002.

Q31. On page 20, #29, Indemnification: Will HCC please make this paragraph mutual?

Response: No.

Q32. Page 29, Criminal Background check: We assume HCC does background checks on all employees. Is there a group rate on these background checks that HCC can pass on to the winning vendor so that the cost of this background check will have a minimal impact on overall pricing?

Response: No.

Q33. Are potential respondents permitted to contact Veronica Douglas regarding the completion of Attachment 2: Determination of Good Faith Effort?

Response: No. contact the Procurement office identified in the solicitation.

Q34. What is the expected number of hours for VRI Services to use in calculation of the total proposed cost?

Response: We are not expecting to utilize VRI services.

Q35. For total proposed cost, should we calculate the number based on three years, or one year?

Response: Total based on three years.

Q36. Is the existing contract hourly rate inclusive of travel, or is travel billed as a separate line item in the invoices?

Response: The current vendor bills travel as a separate line item in invoices.

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