



**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

Hudson River Estuary Program (NYSDEC)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Public Opinion Survey to Identify How Hudson Valley (NY) Residents
Acquire Information About the Hudson River**

October, 2017

The New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPC), in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's (NYSDEC) Hudson River Estuary Program, is inviting proposals to design, conduct, and analyze results of a public opinion survey of residents of the Hudson River Valley in New York State. The purposes of this project are to establish a baseline measure of public understanding of the Hudson River ecosystem; identify the media through which residents acquire information about the river; characterize their relative importance in disseminating such information to the public; determine, where possible, the sources of information (as distinct from the medium of its distribution); and investigate whether various segments of the public typically rely on different media for information. Design of the survey will require involvement of stakeholders including Hudson River Estuary Program and Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve staff. Project deliverables will be the set of questions used in the survey, the response data, and a report analyzing findings and any correlations revealed in that data.

This request for proposals (RFP) includes information on:

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I. Overview

NEIWPCC

NEIWPCC is a not-for-profit interstate organization, established by Congress in 1947 to serve and assist its member states individually and collectively by providing coordination, research, public education, training, and leadership in the management and protection of water quality in the New England states and New York. NEIWPCC strives to coordinate activities and forums that encourage cooperation among the states, educate the public about key water quality issues, support research projects, train environmental professionals, and provide overall leadership in the management and protection of water quality.

The Hudson River Estuary Program

The Hudson River Estuary Program protects and improves the natural and scenic Hudson River watershed for all its residents. The program was created in 1987 and focuses on the tidal Hudson and its adjacent watershed from the federal dam at Troy to upper New York harbor. Its core mission is to ensure clean water; protect and restore fish, wildlife, and their habitats; adapt to climate change; conserve world famous scenery, and improve access to and education about the estuary. The program is guided by New York State's 2015-2020 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda—a forward-looking plan, developed through significant community participation up and down the river. The Hudson River Estuary Program achieves real progress through extensive outreach, coordination with state and federal agencies, and public-private partnerships.

The project to be implemented through this RFP carries out portions of Benefit #6, Target #1 of the 2015-2020 Hudson River Estuary Action Agenda: Residents of the Hudson Valley understand and appreciate the contribution of the estuary, its watershed, and its fish and wildlife to their lives, and take action to conserve the estuary and its resources. Outcome (c) under Target #1 calls for a survey of Hudson Valley residents “to establish the current level of public understanding and appreciation of the estuary and watershed, identify the chief means by which residents receive information about these systems in order to improve education efforts, and measure improvements in understanding and appreciation over a period of years.” (For specifics on the Estuary Program and its Action Agenda see www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4920.html).

II. Project Goal

The goal of this project is to design, conduct, and analyze results of a public survey intended to establish a baseline measure of public understanding of the Hudson River ecosystem, identify the media through which Hudson Valley residents acquire information about the river; characterize their relative importance in disseminating such information to the public; determine, where possible, the sources of information (as distinct from the medium of its distribution); and investigate whether various segments of the public typically rely on different media for information.

III. Scope of Work

This RFP is for services to:

1. In consultation with staff of the Hudson River Estuary Program and Research Reserve, design a set of survey questions that will accomplish the goals listed above.
2. Structure the survey using techniques that reach a sample audience using diverse devices for communication – i.e. mobile phones as well as landlines.

3. Ensure that the sample size is sufficient to support a 95 percent confidence level with a confidence interval or margin of error of 5 percent or less.
4. Conduct the survey within geographic boundaries including riverfront counties extending north to south from Albany and Rensselaer Counties to Westchester and Rockland Counties.
5. Analyze the results with regard to both descriptive and inferential statistics.
6. Produce a final report including an accounting of the sample, a description of the survey questions and methodology, and an analysis of the results.

The selected contractor will coordinate all work with the Hudson River Estuary Program, Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve, and NEIWPC, to include review of draft materials by, and meetings with, Estuary Program staff to ensure that final products are consistent with the requirements of this RFP.

Project Tasks

Task 1: Engage with a team of Hudson River Estuary Program and Research Reserve staff to design survey questions that will achieve the project’s goals.

Task 2: Design a survey methodology that will reach users of diverse devices and forms of media, and that will produce statistically significant results.

Task 3: Conduct the survey and analyze results.

Task 4: Deliver a Final Report that includes an accounting of the sample and response rate, a description of the survey questions and methodology, and an analysis of the results.

Anticipated Project Meetings

Meeting Type	Purpose	Potential Participants
Project kick-off meeting	Site visit to review goals of survey project.	Contractor, Hudson River Estuary Program staff, NYSDEC Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve staff
Meeting to design survey questions	Create questions framed in ways to produce usable responses with the desired information.	Contractor, Hudson River Estuary Program staff, NYSDEC Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve staff
Presentation of analysis of survey results	Present analysis in a setting that allows staff to ask questions to further their understanding of the results	Contractor, Hudson River Estuary Program staff, NYSDEC Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve staff

Desired Outcome

The final product will be data and analysis that allows the Hudson River Estuary Program and the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve to develop communication, outreach and educational strategies more likely to reach their intended audience. Having a baseline of Hudson Valley residents’ understanding of the river

should also enable the programs to repeat portions of the survey in the future to measure whether the strategies are successful.

Applicants that can demonstrate how their proposals support the objectives of the Hudson River Estuary Program’s 2015-2020 Action Agenda, Benefit #6, Target #1 will be reviewed favorably. Background information is available at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5104.html>

IV. General Guidelines for Applicants

Eligibility

Applicants who are eligible to submit proposals in response to this RFP include: federal (non-EPA), state, or local government agencies; interstate agencies; private non-profit organizations and institutions; for-profit organizations; and academic or educational institutions. Partnerships are allowed.

Schedule

It is anticipated that the project will start on January 2, 2018, and be completed by June 30, 2018, with all deliverables and a final report submitted by that date.

The schedule* for this RFP is as follows:

Proposals Due to NEIWPC	November 15, 2017, 12:00 PM EDT (noon)
Applicants Notified of Funding Decisions	Approx. November 30, 2017
Detailed Project Work Plans Due	Approx. December 15, 2017
Project Start Date	January 2, 2018

*Schedule is subject to change.

Funding

There is \$50,000 available for this project and it is anticipated that one successful project will be chosen. Proposals with budgets that exceed the identified funding cannot be considered. Awarded funds may be used for expenses specifically related to the proposed project, including wages and consultant fees. Expendable and non-expendable equipment directly related to the proposed project may qualify for funding, but requires pre-approval (prior to proposal submission) by NEIWPC and must be justified in the proposal. Indirect costs are allowed, but must be in line with the following procedures: Applicants with a valid Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement with their cognizant federal agency must use that rate, and must provide documentation of the negotiated rate. Applicants that do not have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement may charge a maximum indirect rate of 10 percent of direct costs.

Deliverables

The primary deliverables for this project will be the following:

1. Quarterly reports delivered to the NEIWPC project manager no later than the 10th day of January and April during the duration of the project.
2. Final Report: Deliver a Final Report that includes an accounting of the sample and response rate, a description of the survey questions and methodology, and a comprehensive analysis of the results.
3. Meetings- Participate in three project meetings including:
 - Project kick-off meeting

- Meeting to design survey questions
- Presentation of results

All deliverables are to be submitted in draft form in Microsoft Word format for review by project partners and approval by the project manager (See Contact Information in Section IX). All final reports are to be delivered in Adobe .pdf format upon approval by the project manager.

Deliverables, Ownership, and Credit Due

All materials, studies, maps, reports, and other products or data, regardless of physical form or characteristics, produced as a result of this solicitation and funded, in whole or in part, under an agreement with NEIWPC shall be made available to NEIWPC, the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, and the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve in the formats in which it is stored or maintained. NEIWPC, the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, and the U.S. EPA shall have an unrestricted right to use any materials, software, studies, maps, reports, and other products or data generated using assistance funds or specified to be delivered. The contractor shall not obtain, attempt to obtain, or file for a patent, copyright, trademark or any other interest in any such materials, maps, reports, and other products or data without the express, written consent of NEIWPC and subject to any other approvals required by state or federal law. Reports and other deliverables will credit NEIWPC, the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, and U.S. EPA for any work completed under the grant award.

Insurance Requirements

NEIWPC requires its contractors to maintain worker's compensation and liability insurance. More details will be provided to applicants selected for funding. Note this applies for all contractors, including sole proprietors. If you cannot provide proof of insurance, please do not apply for this funding opportunity.

V. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include a (1) cover letter, (2) title page with abstract, (3) narrative with citations, (4) timeline, (5) budgets (both overall and task-based budget formats), (6) budget justification, (7) description of qualifications, and (8) letters of commitment or support. Page limits for each of these components are provided in the individual descriptions below. Proposals that do not contain all of the information requested and/or do not meet the format requirements will be eliminated from consideration. Pages that exceed the maximum number specified for each section will not be reviewed.

Cover Letter

Please include a one-page cover letter, printed on official letterhead and signed by an authorized representative of the lead agency, firm, or institution, with each proposal. The cover letter must state that:

- You are applying for funds under this program.
- You acknowledge that funding is provided on a reimbursement basis.

Title Page

For your convenience, an electronic version of the title page is available as a Microsoft Word document at <http://neiwpc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpc/>. The title page must adhere to the format provided in Appendix A and include all of the following information, using a maximum of one single-spaced, one-sided, typed 8.5" x 11" page with 11-point font and 1-inch margins:

- Project Name: Use the exact project name as it appears throughout the proposal.
- Primary Investigator Name and Contact Information: Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the primary investigator, as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.

- Financial Contact Name and Contact Information (if applicable): Provide the name, title, and affiliation of the individual responsible for financial/contractual negotiations (if different from primary investigator), as well as mailing address, phone number, and email address.
- Project Partners (if any): Provide the names, titles, affiliations, for each of the additional investigators or support staff who will significantly contribute to the project (if any).
- Funds Requested: Provide the amount of money you are requesting from NEIWPCC for the project.
- Matching Funds: Provide the amount of matching funds you and/or your partners will be contributing to the project (if any).
- Federal Tax Identification Number (FID)
- DUNS Number¹: A DUNS number is a unique, non-indicative 9-digit identifier that verifies the existence of a business entity globally. Contractors must provide NEIWPCC with a DUNS number to comply with an administrative condition of NEIWPCC's EPA grant (individuals are exempt).
- Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE): Indicate if your organization is a DBE.
- Abstract: The abstract must accurately describe the project being proposed and include: (1) the objectives of the project, (2) the methodology to be used, and (3) the expected outputs and outcomes of the project and how it addresses this RFP, including environmental benefits to Long Island Sound. **The abstract must fit within the title page.**

Proposal Narrative

The proposal narrative must not exceed three consecutively numbered, single-spaced, typed 8.5" x 11" pages with 11-point font and 1-inch margins. The three-page narrative must include all of the following information:

- **Problem Description:** Briefly describe the project and its relevance to the objectives of the Hudson River Estuary Program's 2015-2020 Action Agenda, Benefit #6, Target #1. This section can also include brief background or introductory information.
- **Objectives:** Outline how the project will achieve the goal of this RFP.
- **Methodology:** Outline the project's design and describe the methods and techniques that will be used to meet the project's goal and tasks.
- **Expected outputs and outcomes:** Describe the project's expected outputs and outcomes, and list and describe each of the specific deliverables and end-products.
- Briefly discuss the **process to be used to evaluate the effectiveness and success** of the project.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Define the roles and responsibilities of all project participants.
- **Citations:** Include references as appropriate within the proposal narrative.

Timeline

Provide a detailed timeline for meeting identified tasks and completing deliverables, with a completion date no later than June 30, 2018. All timelines should be stated in terms of Month #1, #2, #4, etc. rather than specific dates, e.g. "March 5, 2018." Although the project start date is anticipated to be on or about January 2, 2018, this date may change based on the time the actual agreement is established. The timeline must be no more than one 8.5" x 11" page with 1" margins and 11-point font.

Budget

The project budget must be provided in two formats:

¹ Obtaining a DUNS number is free for all entities doing business with the Federal government. Under normal circumstances the DUNS number is issued within 1-2 business days when using the web form process (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>).

First, provide a complete, detailed budget using the format provided in Appendix B. For your convenience, an electronic version of the budget form is available at <http://neiwpsc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpsc/>. The budget must be no more than one 8.5" x 11" page with 1" margins and 11-point font. Along with this budget, provide a brief justification (one page maximum) for the proposed costs in terms of meeting project objectives. Include an explanation of how indirect costs are calculated. Justify subcontracts, if any. Identify and describe current and pending financial resources (including the source) for non-federal cost share or matching funds that are intended to support the project. Entities intending to use a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate must provide documentation of their rate. This documentation does not count toward the page limit.

Second, prepare a budget that is broken down by project tasks. As you develop this budget, keep in mind that contractual payments will be made based on this budget. This budget must be no more than two 8.5" x 11" pages with 1" margins and 11-point font. Matching funds should not be included in the task-based budget.

Qualifications

The applicant chosen for this project should possess the academic and professional expertise and certifications in the relevant subject areas, and have a strong track record in delivering projects of this nature. Applicants must demonstrate understanding of public survey methodology and preferably experience with polling work in the Hudson Valley of New York State. Applicants should have experience and capacity to conduct and manage effective meetings with agency staff and partners. Attention to detail in documenting qualifications that meet the scoring requirements is strongly advised. The qualifications section, including resumes, CVs, descriptions of past projects, etc. must not exceed three pages.

VI. Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted by no later than **12:00 PM EDT (noon) on Thursday November 15, 2017**. No late submissions will be considered. Applicants **must submit their proposals electronically** through the NEIWPC website. Unless prior approval is given, proposals received through e-mail, postal delivery, or any other delivery method will not be accepted.

To submit your proposal, go to <http://neiwpsc.org/about-us/working-with-neiwpsc/contractor-proposal-submissions/> and follow the instructions provided for uploading your file(s). It is highly preferred that the proposal and all supporting information are submitted as a single PDF document. This requires Adobe Acrobat or similar Adobe product (the free Adobe Reader does not allow the conversion of documents into PDF format), or a scanner. If multiple files are to be submitted, you will need to create an archive file (.zip, or .rar) containing all of the files you wish to submit. The file name should be in the following format: "Hudson River Public Opinion Survey_NAME OF YOUR ORGANIZATION." Once you have clicked the "submit" button, please allow adequate time for your submission to process and do not hit the back button or close your browser window. The process is not considered complete until you have reached the confirmation page. If submitted successfully, you will receive an email from NEIWPC (mail@neiwpsc.org) with the subject line "RFP Submission Confirmation" confirming your submission. For questions regarding submission of proposals, contact Mike Jennings of NEIWPC (mjennings@neiwpsc.org).

Pre-Application Conference Call

A conference call will be held on **Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 10:00 AM EST** to answer clarifying questions submitted by potential applicants. If you want to participate in the conference call, please send a request to participate to Rebecca Houser at rebecca.houser@dec.ny.gov by Wednesday, November 1, 2017. Your request should include: your name, affiliation, email, and phone number, and any questions you would like answered. Only questions submitted by email prior to the call will be answered and no additional questions will be

answered after the conference call. It is not necessary to submit a question to participate in the call. All interested applicants will be contacted by email with details for joining the call.

VII. Proposal Evaluation Process

NEIWPCCC will screen all proposals to ensure that they meet all requirements of this RFP. If a proposal is found to be incomplete, the proposal will be eliminated from the competition and NEIWPCCC will notify the applicant. To be considered complete, proposals must include all of components described in Section V. Proposal Requirements. Pages in excess of the limits specified for each component will not be reviewed. Complete and eligible proposals will be reviewed by a panel composed of staff from NEIWPCCC, NYSDEC's Hudson River Estuary Program and the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve. Proposals may also be submitted for external peer reviews. The review team will evaluate the proposals based upon the criteria listed in Appendix D.

VIII. Notification of Awards

Award notification to applicants is expected by Thursday, November 30, 2017. Award recipients may be asked to submit a revised work plan, timeline, and budget at this time. Projects cannot start until the contract is signed by both parties. NEIWPCCC will not pay for expenses incurred prior to the contract start date. Payment for costs incurred will be on a reimbursement basis per the contract payment schedule and contingent upon completion of quarterly progress reports and project deliverables.

IX. Contacts

NEIWPCCC and NYSDEC's Hudson River Estuary Program will accept questions about this RFP by email or phone through Wednesday, November 1, 2017.

For information regarding the application process, contact

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New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
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For information regarding the RFP topic, contact

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