



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) No. 24-03

CREATIVE SERVICES

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Below are the questions received as of November 18, 2024, by 12:00 P.M. Eastern Time, along with the corresponding responses:

1. On page 18, you mention that your approved budget does not exceed \$40,000 per contract year. Is that the contractor budget or the printing/advertising/media buy budget?

Response: \$40,000 is the maximum budget for all services per contract year.

2. At the bottom of page 17, you mention “Developing branding for NVTC programs or projects.” Does the NVTC already have a branding style guide for the main brand?

Response: Yes. NVTC has an existing branding style guide for our main brand. However, we have also sought out new logos for individual programs like our 60th anniversary and our Envision Route 7 program. Any update would be an extension of the existing brand assets.

NVTC’s existing branding style guide can be found here: https://novatransit.org/uploads/procurement/NVTC_Style%20Guide_r5v1.pdf

3. Can you please elaborate on the “Website and web page layout and design” and “Informational videos” mentioned on page 18? What is the scope of those services?

Response: NVTC maintains its prime domain at novatransit.org and a trip-planning site at novarides.org. Any new websites would likely be a microsite geared toward a specific project or initiative, similar to the novarides.org site. Informational videos could support individual projects or initiatives. We have typically produced these in-house with a running time of 3-5 minutes. Considerations can be made for the length and complexity of different videos.

4. Does the \$40,000 budget include printing and mailing or should those estimates—or any others—be separate from the design budget?

Response: The \$40,000 budget includes all expenses, including printing, shipping, manufacturing, etc.

5. Have any contracts for similar services been awarded or utilized by NVTA in the past 5 years? If so, who is the vendor(s) that provided those services?

Response: Yes. Contracts for similar services have been awarded by NVTC in the past. Sagetopia, LLC is the current vendor providing these services.

6. Can a rider clause be inserted into the resulting contract to allow for similar services to be provided under this procurement to other public agencies, including but not limited to NVTC member jurisdictions?

Response. No. NVTC will not include a rider clause in the resulting contract.

7. If the NVTC receives grant or sponsorship money to fund additional needs beyond the allocated \$40,000 per contract year, will a separate procurement process be required to utilize those additional funds?

Response: No. A separate procurement process will not be required if grant funding becomes available to fund additional needs under the resulting contract.

8. According to the RFP, Task Orders will be issued at the negotiated and accepted firm-fixed hourly rate for each service that is needed. Should the Offeror provide ONE STANDARD HOURLY RATE across all personnel or DIFFERENT HOURLY RATES for the different employees assigned to the task order?

Response: Ultimately, NVTC wants to see the final overall rate that your firm charges for each service that is needed, especially those listed under “Ongoing Support and Development of Creative Design Materials.” If your overall rate is comprised of one standard hourly rate or different hourly rates, please feel free to include this information, though it is not required.

9. Does NVTC have an established brand guide to follow?

Response: Yes. NVTC has an existing branding style guide for our main brand. However, we have also sought out new logos for individual programs like our 60th anniversary and our Envision Route 7 program. Any update would be an extension of the existing brand assets.

NVTC’s existing branding style guide can be found here: https://novatransit.org/uploads/procurement/NVTC_Style%20Guide_r5v1.pdf

10. Could you please specify in what file formats content and images will be provided for the three outlined 50-page reports (A, B, C)?

Response: For the NVTC Annual Report and Commuter Choice Annual Report, text content is typically shared in Word document format and images are provided in standard formats like .png and .jpeg via Dropbox or a similar tool.

11. Regarding the “Performance and Condition of WMATA” report that requires print and fulfillment support, has this already been designed and created, and if so, what format are the final files in? If this has not been created, will the design and layout be part of the contract for creative services?

Response: This report is produced in-house. The bulk of the report is a Word document, though some pages and the cover are produced in InDesign. The contractor will work closely with NVTC staff to ensure that the standards and file formats needed for printing are included and assemble the pages for production, printing and distribution.

12. Does NVTC have a preferred print and mail vendor, or is the selected firm given discretion in choosing an appropriate vendor?

Response: The contractor can select or recommend appropriate vendors.

13. For the reports that require mailing, will NVTC provide the mailing data? In what file format?

Response: Yes. NVTC typically provides a spreadsheet with names and addresses. The number of mailed copies is typically in the 10-20 range.

14. Are the costs for printing and mailing services budgeted separately from or included in the contracted budget for Creative Services?

Response: The \$40,000 budget includes all expenses, including printing, shipping, manufacturing, etc.

15. Are all reports intended to be 8.5”x11” in final size?

Response: NVTC is open to considering other sizes and formats.

16. Is there a requirement or desire to have the final reports in PDF form for posting online or sharing electronically in addition to the final printed product?

Response: Yes. NVTC publishes all reports here:
<https://novatransit.org/resources/completed-studies-archive/>

17. Is it an absolute requirement to have familiarity or have worked with NVTC or a given public sector client?

Response: No. Demonstrated experience working with public sector clients and familiarity with the Northern Virginia region's public transportation network is only one of the five criteria components that will be evaluated. Familiarity with NVTC and the Northern Virginia public transportation network, including operational and political constraints, is important because it informs our communications projects.

18. How many proposals does NVTC expect to receive?

Response: This RFP has been publicly advertised to encourage maximum competition. NVTC is unsure of how many proposals we will receive.

19. Is the \$40K annual budget strictly to be used any given year? Else, if one year NVTC spends \$45K, will NVTC spend \$35K the following year to balance out the original budget number of \$40K/year?

Response: \$40,000 is the maximum budget for all services per contract year.

20. What are the chances that NVTC will receive grant or sponsorship money and from whom would NVTC expect to receive such funds?

Response: While NVTC cannot predict what will happen in the future, we have received previous grant awards from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to fund marketing campaigns that promote the use of public transit.

21. Please share the printing specs (weight of paper, paper stock name, number of colors used, etc.) for the annual reports, Performance and Condition of WMATA, and annual report for the Commuter Choice.

Response: For 2024, the report will be 50 pages, with a four-page cover with 80# silk, interior pages on 100# silk text, perfect bound to 8.5x11 on 11" edge with a UV coating. This is a full color report.

22. What length does NVTC expect the information videos to be?

Response: NVTC has typically done videos that are three-to-five minutes long.

23. Do these videos need to be shot by a videographer or does NVTC already have the footage?

Response: NVTC typically shoots videos in-house and occasionally uses stock video.

24. What websites and web pages does NVTC expect to be design as part of this project?

Response: NVTC maintains its prime domain at novatransit.org and a trip-planning site at novarides.org. Any new websites would likely be a microsite geared toward a specific project or initiative, similar to the novarides.org site. Informational videos could support individual projects or initiatives.

25. Will NVTC share all answers to questions received from potential vendors?

Response: Yes. The answers to all questions received will be posted to NVTC's website.

26. In the eVA portal, it states in red the following: Solicitation only accepts paper responses. However, on page 6 section 9, it states that it can be submitted as a PDF. Can you please clarify how we can submit our responses?

Response: The proposal shall be submitted electronically in PDF format through NVTC's procurement portal <https://tinyurl.com/novatransitRFP>. The paper responses reference in the eVA portal further highlights that NVTC will be accepting proposals via PDF format only (and in accordance with the RFP), as opposed to electronic submissions through the eVA portal. **NVTC will not accept proposals submitted through the eVA portal.**

27. Will NVTC provide all assets or is our firm responsible for providing assets such as stock images, videos, etc.?

Response: Yes. NVTC typically shoots video in-house and uses some stock video.

28. Who is responsible for paying for the delivery fees and fulfillment of the annual reports?

Response: NVTC is responsible for paying for the delivery fees and fulfillment of the annual reports.

29. Regarding the Informational Videos, what is entailed with the development of these? Images, or filming and editing? Can you please elaborate?

Response: We typically shoot video in-house and use some stock video. They typically run for three-to-five minutes and feature our board members or staff.

30. Is this RFQ a follow-on or a new requirement? If follow-on, can you please provide incumbent award information?

Response: This RFP is for a new contract for creative services. A task order for will be issued for services on an as-needed basis.

31. Are there any specific font, font sizes, or margin requirements for the proposal submittal?

Response: No. There are no specific font, font sizes, or margin requirements for the proposal submittal. NVTC only requires that the proposal be submitted electronically in PDF format through NVTC's procurement portal <https://tinyurl.com/novatransitRFP>.

32. Do resumes for key personnel count towards the page limit?

Response: No. Resumes are excluded from the page limit.

33. Does the NVTC have a preferred binding method for all the specified reports (e.g., saddle-stitched, spiral-bound, perfect-bound), or should we recommend options based on the project's budget and design?

Response: NVTC is open to suggestions.

34. For all reports, could you specify the printed materials' preferred paper type (e.g., weight, finish)?

Response: Recent reports are typically 100# silk cover and 80# interior pages, saddle-stitched, but NVTC is open to suggestions.

35. For the Annual Organizational, Performance, and Condition of WMATA and Commuter Choice reports, should the mailing be local to Virginia or cross-country?

Response: The mailing will be mostly in Virginia, with some to other parts of the Greater Washington region.

36. How many "other" reports may be requested throughout the contract term?

Response: It is hard to predict. NVTC has a baseline of three reports we produce annually, but sometimes we are asked by local elected officials or the Virginia General Assembly to research other topics and produce reports.

37. Please provide details on the award type (firm-fixed-price, time & materials, no-cost, etc.).

Response: This will be a task order based contract. A task order will be issued, at the negotiated and accepted rate, for each service that is needed during the duration of this contract.

38. Should the \$40,000 annual budget include all labor, materials, printing, shipping, and additional expenses?

Response: Yes. The \$40,000 annual budget includes all labor, materials, printing, shipping, and additional expenses.

39. Can we submit our cost estimate using our pricing template? If not, is there a specific template or format that NVTC prefers or requires for cost submissions?

Response: Yes. You may submit your cost estimate using your own pricing template. NVTC does not have a specific template, nor do we require a specific format for the information to be presented.

40. Are project management meetings to be held in person, virtually, or hybrid?

Response: NVTC has typically held meetings via phone or other virtual methods.

41. Can NVTC please provide a bit more detail (including frequency) on the following scope of work items? If requested, would these items be part of the \$40K annual budget, or is there additional funding for these items:

Response: All items listed count toward the \$40,000 yearly maximum.

- a. Developing branding for NVTC programs or projects
 - i. Are existing templates or styles, or will we propose all new branding?

Response: NVTC has an existing branding style guide, but we have also sought out new logos for individual programs like our 60th anniversary and our Envision Route 7 program. Any update would be an extension of the existing brand assets. Frequency: as needed

NVTC's existing branding style guide can be found here: https://novatransit.org/uploads/procurement/NVTC_Style%20Guide_r5v1.pdf

- b. Additional reports, digital and printed
 - i. Will this also require printing/shipping?

Response: Most of our reports are published online. We print and mail the WMATA and Commuter Choice Annual Reports as part of a legal requirement established by the Virginia General Assembly and if they were to require the same for another report, we would follow that directive. Frequency: Minimum of three reports per year, others to be produced by direction of the Commission, Executive Director or Virginia General Assembly.

- c. Informational brochures and one-page documents
 - i. Will this also require printing/shipping?

Response: Typically, yes. To NVTC's offices, not to individual recipients. Frequency: Minimum of two per year, but potentially as many as ten.

- d. Informational videos
 - i. What length of videos does NVTC envision requesting and how many a year?

Response: NVTC has typically made videos that are three-to-five minutes long. Frequency: two-to-three a year.

- e. Public display banners and pop-up displays
 - i. Does this include the design and purchase of the banners/displays? Frequency?

Response: Yes, this does include the design and purchase of the banners/displays. Frequency: Occasional. As needed.

- f. Promotional items
 - i. Does this include the design and purchase of promotional items? Could you please give an example of a promotional item and the quantities that NVTC might request?

Response: Yes. For NVTC's 60th anniversary in 2024, we acquired paperweights, notepads, pens and lapel pins. Frequency: Occasional. As needed.

g. Advertising assets

- i. Does this include the design and ad placement cost?

Response: NVTC has conducted three marketing campaigns since 2019. The design cost is part of this RFP, but the ad placement is not. Frequency: While no campaigns are currently planned, NVTC could receive a grant from the Commonwealth of Virginia for future campaigns.

h. Website and web page layout and design

Response: NVTC maintains its prime domain at novatransit.org and a trip-planning site at novarides.org. Any new websites would likely be a microsite geared toward a specific project or initiative, similar to the novarides.org site. Frequency: as needed. No immediate needs.

42. Does the NVTC have an existing media repository of assets (photos, videos, etc.), or will the contractor be responsible for developing all new content?

Response: Yes. NVTC has a media repository of photos and videos that we have taken. We typically provide both to the contractor.

43. Should website design or layout services integrate with specific platforms or content management systems (e.g., WordPress, Drupal)?

Response: NVTC's prime domain novatransit.org uses WordPress. We also maintain a microsite at novarides.org that uses WebFlow.

44. The work plan must include a task-by-task/sub-task-by sub- task schedule of the time required to complete the projects. In the cost proposal the work plan steps should be supported by the proposed hours the Offeror agrees to commit to the task. This schedule must identify the major milestones, project deliverables, and estimated total time to complete each task for the entire project. The schedule shall include progress reporting and project meetings with adequate time for NVTC to review and approve contractor deliverables.

- a. In reference to the above proposal requirement, can NVTC please provide a timeline on when each of the planned activities should be started and when they are due so that we can include all of the required information in our response.

Response: Work on the Commuter Choice annual report typically starts in June with publication in early October. Work on the Report on the Condition and Performance of WMATA typically starts in August with publication in mid-December. Work on the NVTC annual report typically starts in September with publication near January 1. Given that the remaining services are on-call projects, sample timelines are acceptable.

45. We are a Canadian company. Are you accepting proposals from foreign entities?

Response: NVTC does not prohibit foreign entities from responding to our solicitations and competing to work on our projects.

46. Are there any existing pain points or challenges that you want to address?

Response: No. NVTC does not have any existing pain points or challenges.

47. Who is your target audience?

Response: NVTC's target audience includes the following: NVTC Commissioners, who are local elected officials; the staff of the local jurisdictions NVTC represents, as well as neighboring jurisdictions; statewide elected officials; and, when relevant, the general public.

48. Have specific target demographics, interests, or geographic locations been established?

Response: NVTC's primary audience includes NVTC Commissioners, who are local elected officials; the staff of the local jurisdictions NVTC represents, as well as neighboring jurisdictions; statewide elected officials; and, when relevant, the general public. Our past marketing campaigns have targeted working adults who are most likely to ride public transit.

49. Do you have any examples of competitors that you admire or would like to differentiate from?

Response: While not a competitor in the business sense, we do pay attention to the work of both the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA) because they operate in the same region.

50. What are your preferred processes for revisions and feedback?

Response: NVTC has typically provided feedback via email or comments on Adobe documents shared in the cloud.

51. Could you tell us how this project would fit within the greater organizational strategy?

Response: NVTC maintains a robust internal and external outreach effort. Our primary audience includes NVTC Commissioners, who are local elected officials; the staff of the local jurisdictions NVTC represents, as well as neighboring jurisdictions; statewide elected officials; and, when relevant, the general public. Our past marketing campaigns have targeted working adults who are most likely to ride public transit. NVTC will continue to provide information on public transit needs, including funding at a critical time for the industry.

52. Are brand guidelines available for reference?

Response: Yes. NVTC's existing branding style guide can be found here: https://novatransit.org/uploads/procurement/NVTC_Style%20Guide_r5v1.pdf