REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

FOR

UNIVERSITY VISUAL IDENTITY REVIEW, ICON DEVELOPMENT AND BRAND BOOK CREATION

ADDENDUM NO. [1]

The Proposal due date of May 5th, 2021 will not change as a result of this Addendum.
CLARIFICATIONS/QUESTIONS:

1. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)
   There is no limitation regarding the location of the vendor’s office.

2. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?
   There will be multiple meetings that will need to be conducted in person.

3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)
   Probably. But a vendor coming from outside the United States will need to show the same kind of extensive understanding of the key markets and constituents the University brand is working to connect with.

4. Are emailed proposal submissions sufficient for this RFP? Our team is primarily operating remotely due to social distancing precautions and COVID guidelines.
   The RFP lists 3 hard copies and 1 digital copy via email as the submission modes.

5. Please describe the “just-completed qualitative market research”. What was the scope/scale, which target audiences did you study, etc.
   Completed by &Partners and Perception Ink, the analysis included focus groups of faculty/staff/administration, current students, parents of current students, prospective students, alumni, donors and business leaders.

6. What has prompted the decision to develop a new University icon logo at this time? When was it last updated?
   The University does not have an existing Icon logo.

7. What about the existing icon logo is not working well for you?
   The University does not have an existing Icon logo. The university has used a flame as an additional internal image, but not as a representative meant to identify the university.

8. What are the top 3 strategic objectives for MSU Mankato in the next year and why? How do you see the work in this RFP supporting those objectives?
   The University is welcoming its 13th President, Dr. Edward Inch, on July 1, 2021. Dr. Inch will begin working on his strategic priorities at that point. From 2016-2021 the University had six strategic priorities: Enhancing Student Success and Completion, Elevating Faculty Distinction and Academic Achievement, Expanding Regional and Global Impact, Leading Equity and Inclusive Excellence, Advancing a Culture of Evidence and Innovative Organizational Designs, Leveraging the Power of Partnerships and Collaboration.

9. Do you have an established brand strategy that the new icon logo will be aligned to?
   There is a well-established suite of visual identity marks. All brand elements can be found here: https://www.mnsu.edu/standards/logos/
10. To help us scope number of logo versions needed—how many logos are in the existing suite of logos?
   All brand elements can be found here: https://www.mnsu.edu/standards/logos/

11. Where the RFP states “develop, design and deliver a complementary University icon logo,”
    does this mean it needs to work in conjunction with the existing graphic/wordmark logo or
    as a replacement to the existing logo?
    The expectation is that the Icon logo will be complimentary to the existing suite of logos
    and wordmarks. It will provide a unique visual representation that will be used as an
    alternative to the University wordmark.

12. Our understanding is that the scope of this work is limited to updating the logo only (with
    some minor exceptions), and that the other brand visual elements (i.e., brand colors,
    typography, etc.) will remain as-is. Is that correct?
    Page 5-6 lists the complete scope of the work.

13. Please explain your definition of a “Brand Book”. How do you envision this differing from
    brand standards? What is its purpose?
    We are looking for an easy-to-follow style guide that lays out specific guidelines for
    using the university’s brand elements (specifically, logos and colors) in a manner that is
    clear, concise and easy to use. We will use it to educate our internal constituents about
    the proper use of brand elements.

14. What are your goals for the rollout of the new icon logo? What KPIs will you be measuring?
    Do you have benchmark measurements we’ll be tracking against?
    The overall goal for the rollout is to build recognition of the new icon logo as
    representing Minnesota State University, Mankato so that it can stand on its own as an
    identifier. The primary KPI to measure will be awareness lift, although other KPIs may
    be developed specific to the components of the marketing plan. Relevant benchmarks
    will be provided as needed.

15. The Work Plan includes campus consultation and campus buy-in. Will representatives from
    various groups affiliated with the university (i.e., staff, faculty, current students, alumni, etc.)
    be available during summer months (June through August) to be included as part of the
    process?
    The contract is expected to run as long as eight months, partly due to the lack of access to
    students and faculty during June-August. The successful vendor will build a workplan
    around that timing.

16. Are there any anticipated challenges with the icon logo rollout you are particularly concerned
    about (i.e. campus buy-in, loss of brand recognition, brand governance, etc.)?
    Primary concern will be constituent buy-in. The need for an aggressive and
    comprehensive rollout, plus a multi-year plan aimed at normalizing the new logo is
    important.
17. Have you worked with agency partners in the past? If so, what have you most appreciated in those partners, and conversely, where have they most underperformed?
   Yes, significant experience by members of the Mar/Comm staff. The most valued aspects of those relationships have been transparency, a willingness to help us ask questions we haven’t thought about, and high-quality work product.

18. Do you have a budget identified for this work, and if so, can you share it?
   Yes, a budget has been established. No, it is not public. However, Minn State policy only requires an RFP for vendor contracts over $50,000.

19. What is your timing for start and completion of this work? Do you have a target launch date for the new icon? Are there any hard deadlines or additional projects reliant on completion of this work we should be aware of?
   Ideally the start of this work would be June, 2021 with completion by January, 2022. There are no hard deadlines at this time.

20. You identify in the RFP the people from your team that will be involved in the selection process. Will those same people be the primary team working on this project, if not, who would we be working with from your team? Can you share more about your approval process (in regards to the project work, not the RFP selection)? Are decisions made by a single person or a small group/task force? Do recommendations need to be presented to additional senior leaders/board members for approval?
   A small team of Advancement leaders (4) will be decision makers in the project, but the VP-Advancement will decide any ties. The University has a new President starting July 1st, 2021. The new President will have an opportunity to engage at whatever level he chooses; this could alter the decision process somewhat. It is currently expected that final recommendations will be made via presentation to the President’s Cabinet.

21. Are there any specific KPIs tied to this work? How will success be measured?
   KPIs will be developed in concert with the successful vendor; overall success will be measured upon the successful launch of the Icon Logo with buy-in from all constituent groups, and the campus feedback on the Brand Book.

22. What are the top 3 attributes and/or capabilities you are looking for in a partner?
   High quality creative design, willingness to help us ask questions we haven’t thought about, and strong history of brand enhancement for previous client.

23. Can you provide any additional information around which Mankato stakeholders you anticipate being involved in the development and/or rollout of a new logo?
   We anticipate a large stakeholder group/committee including faculty/staff/administration, current students, alumni, Foundation Board members, Alumni Association Board members, donors, bargaining unit leadership, and Mankato residents.
24. Is there an incumbent agency you have partnered with for similar scopes of creative work? Minnesota State University Mankato hasn’t partnered with a creative agency for this kind of work in more than a decade.

25. Do you have any specific preferences for office location or qualifications of the agency you choose through this RFP?
   Unique preferences are listed on pages 10-11 of the RFP. There will be multiple meetings that will need to be conducted in person, so a vendor will need to factor that consideration into their bid.

26. When was the last time the University updated its visual identity? Was that identity developed internally or with an external partner?
   The current university wordmarks were updated in 1998. The graphic design firm involved is currently unknown.

27. Besides the "University icon logo" to be designed and "possible typographical updates to a select group of Athletic logos," will any other brand and sub-brand identities need to be updated (suite of existing logos, other departments, etc.)?
   At this time only the design elements described in the RFP will be focused on.

28. Do you see the Marketing Plan Rollout as a prospective student campaign or is it more of a plan for how the identity is integrated into the university's communication program?
   The expectation is that the vendor will create a rollout of the new Icon logo designed to build excitement and acceptance among all university constituencies over a period of a couple years. The expectation is that the Mar/Comm staff would assist in the plan development, and be responsible for the plan’s execution.

The above ADDENDUM shall be attached to and become part of the bid. Receipt of this Addendum shall be acknowledged by including it with the bid. Failure to do so may subject BIDDER to disqualification.

END OF ADDENDUM NO. [1]