



# Maine Community College System

## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL MARKET RESEARCH**

**ISSUE DATE:  
November 13, 2019**

**E-MAIL SUBMISSIONS TO:  
[smayo@mccs.me.edu](mailto:smayo@mccs.me.edu)**

### **SUMMARY**

The Maine Community College System (MCCS) seeks to enter into a contract with a market research firm to conduct comprehensive, multi-phase market research to identify the causes of noncompletion and barriers to reconnection among the population of Maine residents with some college credits but no college credential, to identify messaging strategies that would persuade these students to complete credentials and the supports necessary for success, and to compile a report of these findings to inform and support development of an adult reconnect program. MCCS will award a contract for the work to be performed once project funding is secured.

### **GENERAL OVERVIEW**

The MCCS is Maine's comprehensive two-year college system offering nearly 300 career and transfer programs, continuing education and customized training for business and industry.

**Additional information about the institutions within the MCCS can be found at:**

Maine Community College System (Augusta): [mccs.me.edu](http://mccs.me.edu)

Central Maine Community College (Auburn): [cmcc.edu](http://cmcc.edu)

Eastern Maine Community College (Bangor): [emcc.edu](http://emcc.edu)

Kennebec Valley Community College (Fairfield and Hinckley): [kvcc.me.edu](http://kvcc.me.edu)

Northern Maine Community College (Presque Isle): [nmcc.edu](http://nmcc.edu)

Southern Maine Community College (South Portland and Brunswick): [smccme.edu](http://smccme.edu)

Washington County Community College (Calais): [wccc.me.edu](http://wccc.me.edu)

York County Community College (Wells): [yccc.edu](http://yccc.edu)

## **SCOPE OF WORK**

The market research shall include but not be limited to:

1. Working with MCCS and college staff, identify states that have developed successful adult reconnect programs and conduct secondary research on those programs to identify best practices, lessons learned, and strategies that can inform the next research steps in this project.
2. Drawing from a comprehensive data set from the National Student Clearinghouse, conduct at least four focus groups comprised of non-completers and adult learners strategically located across the state using moderator guidelines that will be developed collaboratively with the MCCS and college staff and that have been informed by the secondary research. These focus groups are intended to set a baseline of data.
3. Analyze and report to the MCCS on findings from the focus group and use the findings to inform the field survey of Maine adults who have not completed a college credential.
4. Using the same comprehensive data set from the National Student Clearinghouse, conduct the field survey of a representative, but substantial sample, using a field survey questionnaire developed collaboratively with the MCCS and college staff. The field survey is intended to validate the findings from the focus groups with a larger group and to provide deeper and broader understanding of the data.
5. Synthesize the research, focus groups, field surveys, and MCCS data into a final report to be shared first with college and system leadership and then more broadly with faculty and staff at an MCCS convening in June 2020. The report will be designed to provide a clear roadmap for an adult reconnect plan that identifies messaging strategies; policy, procedural, academic, personal, and other barriers; and structural changes in academic program delivery and support services for a successful program. The report will also identify existing practices within MCCS that have proved successful and might be scaled systemwide.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

The selected individual or firm shall have the following qualifications:

1. Experience conducting similar types of market research projects.
2. Experience working in and knowledge of Maine.
3. Strong interpersonal and communication skills;
4. Individuals or firms that wish to be considered for this project should submit a letter indicating interest and the ability to start work immediately. Consultants have an obligation to disclose any situation of actual or potential conflict that impacts their capacity to serve the best interest of the Maine Community College System, or that may reasonably be perceived as having this effect. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification or the termination of the Contract.

## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION**

The following must be included in the submission:

- (a) A statement of qualifications;
- (b) A list of previous market research studies;
- (c) A schedule of fees;
- (d) If a firm, a description of key personnel to be involved in the project;
- (e) Confirmation that work can be started in January 2020 and concluded by May 2020; and
- (f) A list of three references from past clients for work performed within the last three years.

The firm selected for this project will be required to show evidence of, and maintain through the completion of the project, all required insurance.

All responses should be addressed to: Suzanne Mayo, [smayo@mccs.me.edu](mailto:smayo@mccs.me.edu)

Review of qualifications will begin immediately and remain open until a market researcher for this project is identified.

**NOTICE TO VENDORS AND BIDDERS:  
STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL MCCS CONTRACTS**

The following standard contracting terms and conditions are incorporated and shall become a part of any final contract that will be awarded by any college or other operating unit of the Maine Community College System (collectively “MCCS”). These terms and conditions derive from the public nature and limited resources of the MCCS. MCCS DOES NOT AGREE TO:

1. Provide any defense, hold harmless or indemnity;
2. Waive any statutory or constitutional immunity;
3. Apply the law of a state other than Maine;
4. Procure types or amounts of insurance beyond those MCCS already maintains or waive any rights of subrogation;
5. Add any entity as an additional insured to MCCS policies of insurance;
6. Pay attorneys’ fees, costs, expenses or liquidated damages;
7. Promise confidentiality in a manner contrary to Maine’s Freedom of Access Act;
8. Permit an entity to change unilaterally any term or condition once the contract is signed; and
9. Automatic renewals for term(s) greater than month-to-month.

By submitting a response to a Request for Proposal, bid or other offer to do business with MCCS, YOUR ENTITY UNDERSTANDS AND AGREES THAT:

1. The above standard terms and conditions are thereby incorporated into any agreement entered into between MCCS and your entity; that such terms and condition shall control in the event of any conflict with such agreement; and that your entity will not propose or demand any contrary terms;
2. The above standard terms and conditions will govern the interpretation of such agreement notwithstanding the expression of any other term and/or condition to the contrary;
3. Your entity will not propose to any college or other operating unit of the MCCS any contractual documents of any kind that are not in at least 11-point black font on a white background and completely contained in one Word or PDF document, and that any references to terms and conditions, privacy policies or any other conditions referenced outside of the contract will not apply; and
4. Your entity will identify at the time of submission which, if any, portion or your submitted materials are entitled to “trade secret” exemption from disclosure under Maine’s Freedom of Access Act; that failure to so identify will authorize MCCS to conclude that no portions are so exempt; and that your entity will defend, indemnify and hold harmless MCCS in any and all legal actions that seek to compel MCCS to disclose under Maine’s Freedom of Access Act some or all of your submitted materials and/or contract, if any, executed between MCCS and your entity.