



ARF Online Research Quality Council

**Request for Proposal
(RFP)**

Research Analysts

Date Issued: *June 10, 2008*

Project Lead/RFP Contacts:

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1. Introduction

Statement of Purpose

The Steering Committee and Client Advisory Board for the ARF's Online Research Quality Council are seeking support for an industry-wide research-on-research project. With this request we are seeking a proposal for the specific portion:

*Research Analysts: one Professional analyst and one Academic analyst (the "Vendor").
Vendors may submit proposals on their own or as a team.*

Background Information

The key goals of the proposed US industry-wide research on research are to:

- Measure the degree to which duplication occurs in samples when multiple sample sources are used in both a national sample and for a smaller geographic area
- Measure self-reported multi-panel membership
- Measure respondent motivations and attentiveness
- Compare survey results across online sample providers and across modes for consistency
- Compare the wave-over-wave consistency of survey results for independent samples from the same provider
- Compare survey results to external benchmarks to assess comparability
- Conduct statistical analyses to identify mode effects, investigate the effects of self-reported multi-panel memberships on survey results, identify respondent segments correlated with dishonesty or errors, and investigate the effects of survey length on survey results and respondent survey taking behavior.
- Present findings to the industry along with recommendations to the industry.

The online portions of the proposed study will rely on sample provided by online sample providers who agree to participate. It will also include a set of offline samples (mail, phone, and central location). Results from the study will be blinded. Vendors must be willing to enter into appropriate mutual non-disclosure legal arrangements to ensure the utmost confidentiality and security of the data. The geography under study is the United States

Scope of Work

Vendor must be willing to enter into appropriate mutual non-disclosure legal arrangements to ensure confidentiality and security of the data, identities of the sample providers and related findings. Sample supplier identity must be kept "blind" and confidential.

Selected vendors will or may be asked to:

- Review the detailed project plan at each stage and offer recommendations for further analysis or other recommendations to improve the reliability of the project and defensibility of its findings.
- Conduct statistical analyses to identify:
 - Respondent segments/types and correlations with data quality: Can we predict the types of respondents most likely to be fraudulent? Inattentive? Does this vary by mode?
 - Effects of self-reported multi-panel membership on data quality: Do those with multiple panel memberships produce results that differ from others? Is there a threshold number of self reported memberships after which data quality is

affected? Can potential biases be corrected via weighting or avoided with appropriate balancing of the outgoing sample? Does the percentage with multiple panel memberships vary by mode?

- Effects of survey design on data quality: How is survey length connected to measures of respondent attentiveness and data quality?
- How does data quality vary by mode? By type of sample source?
- Effects of previous participation and frequency of participation
- A determination of the validity and reliability of different sample sources
- Work as part of a committee to write the final report
- Provide advice to the Steering Committee as required.

Characteristics of Desired Analysts

- Practitioner or academic, methodologist with strong analytic and design skills
- Exceptional ability to identify and interpret differences in results
- Panel experience preferred but not required
- Must understand differences between phone, online, mail, and CLT research
- Willing to enter into mutual non-disclosure legal agreements
- High credibility within the industry including across diverse categories and methodologies and MR firms
- Highest integrity and objectivity

Deliverables

1. Interim report on the research results. Further queries may be added after discussion by the committee
2. Final written report
3. Final presentation to the ARF Online Research Quality Council
4. Presence as needed when results are shared with the industry

Contractual Terms and Conditions

Attached is the ARF non-disclosure agreement (NDA). This must be signed and returned to the ARF on or before the Final Proposal Due Date.

Proposal Requirements

- Statement of vendor's particular interest in the project
- Detailed description of relevant industry experience in providing advice and data analysis for similar research projects
- Summary of authorship of papers, publications and articles
- Statement explaining why vendor should be chosen and how vendor would add value to this project
- Experience in working on projects which involved reporting to or being part of a research consortium team.
- Confirmation of availability during key phases of the project. (Proposed project calendar attached.)
- Cost estimate – Hourly rate and number of hours expected to deliver
- Two client references

Companion Documents

Please note that this RFP is accompanied by a companion document entitled “Research on Research Description Summary.” This document will provide a better understanding of the scope and goals of this project and the applicant’s attention to it will ensure that the proposal is as complete and directed as possible.

2. Evaluation and Award Process

The evaluation committee will award the project to the vendor(s) considered most qualified to implement the deduping process on this study, adhere to the protection of PII and sample provider identity, and act in accordance with the points articulated under the “Evaluation Criteria” section of part 5 ARF Review Process. The ARF’s decisions are final and binding in all respects.

RFP Schedule

ARF anticipates the RFP process to follow the tentative schedule shown below; however, ARF retains the right to add days and/or events to the schedule. Any and all changes to the schedule are at the sole discretion of the ARF. In the event that ARF changes the schedule, all Vendors will be notified. Notwithstanding the foregoing, ARF will give Vendors the minimum amount of time to meet Vendor deliverables as indicated in this schedule. Requests for extensions of the Response Due Date will NOT be granted. Vendors should add sufficient mail time to ensure timely delivery of any applicable Vendor deliverables.

Research Analysts

Deliverable	Date
RFP Issued Date	6/10/08
Vendor Intent to Participate Acknowledgement	6/17/08
Questions are allowed to be asked through this date	6/23/08
Select Consultants	7/15/08
Recommendation to Steering Committee/Council	7/29/08
Business Award Date	8/05/08

Sample Providers

The exact number is unknown at this time, but the resulting set will most likely consist of the major full-service research companies with online panels, third party panel sample suppliers, third party routing/affiliate online sample suppliers, and database companies. It will also include a set of offline samples (mail, phone, and central location).

Geography

United States

3. Proposal Submission Guidelines

Vendor, by submitting a response, represents that they possess the capabilities, equipment, and resources necessary to provide the services detailed in their response to this RFP.

The response will also represent that:

- 1) The materials provided by Vendor conform to the specifications and are error free;
- 2) Vendor has the right to submit the RFP and enter into a contract;
- 3) Vendor has all rights and licenses necessary to provide methodology, technology, and services to ARF;
- 4) ARF will not be obligated to pay license fees to Vendor or any third party based upon use of the methodology, etc.;
- 5) Vendor will comply with applicable Federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations; and,
- 6) The services will be performed in a professional and workmanlike manner.

Non-Disclosure Agreement & Confidentiality

The attached ARF Non-Disclosure Agreement signed by Vendors will be deemed to cover this RFP. Vendors are obligated to treat all information concerning this RFP and the services as confidential. The information in this RFP may only be used to fulfill the purposes of the RFP.

Should Vendors elect to engage the services of any third party ("Subcontractor") to respond to the requirements of this RFP, a representative of the Subcontractor must sign and return two originals of the provided Non-Disclosure Agreement for ARF's signature before the Subcontractor may review any documentation associated with this RFP. All Subcontractors will be obligated to hold all information concerning this RFP in confidence.

Vendor Data

All Vendor data provided in your Proposal will be provided the same protection of its sensitivity by ARF as ARF accords its own information. This protection will include the care given by team members and third party consultants retained by ARF to assist in the Proposal evaluation. Data included in Proposals such as process, financial, or management information that is not to be disclosed to the public for any purposes other than evaluation of the Proposal should be marked "Confidential". All data delivered as part of this RFP becomes the property of ARF and will not be returned.

Communications

Vendor contact with ARF personnel pursuant to this RFP shall be restricted to the ARF Contact and in accordance with the terms described herein. **Only those communications that are in writing from the ARF Contacts may be considered as a duly authorized expression on behalf of ARF.**

Company Overview & Bios

Vendor is to provide a company overview, and the name, title, contact information, and brief biography for Vendor's key workers on project. Suggested contents for company overview are:

- 1.) Brief history of firm
- 2.) Strengths/Accomplishments
- 3.) Size/Organization structure
- 4.) Policies and Positions of Company's Stakeholders

ARF Contact Information: Vendor Contacts for RFP Questions

Name / Title	Contact Info
<i>Tom Evans, VP, Digital & Cross Media Research, ESPN</i>	Thomas.C.Evans@ESPN.com
<i>Efrain Ribeiro, COO, IPSOS Interactive</i>	Efrain.Ribeiro@Ipsos-na.com
<i>Renee Smith, VP, Panel Quality, Harris Interactive</i>	RSmith@HarrisInteractive.com

Vendor Questions

Vendors shall be given **one** opportunity prior to submitting their Proposal to ask questions related to the RFP. All questions should be clear and concise and must be consolidated into one submission per Vendor. **Questions submitted after the due date will not be accepted.** The text of select questions and answers of a substantive nature will be forwarded to all Vendors being solicited. Questions of a similar nature may be combined into a common question for a response based on ARF's discretion. **All communication with the ARF Contacts must be in writing only.**

Amendments, modifications and Cancellations of RFP

Receipt of a Proposal and/or any and all discussions occurring during this RFP does not obligate ARF in any way. ARF reserves the right to accept or reject any and all Proposals. ARF reserves the right to revise, amend, cancel, and/or reissue this RFP at any time for any reason, in which event such action shall be communicated in writing and provided to all Vendors.

Use of Proposals

ARF reserves the right to use any and all concepts contained in the Proposals submitted in response to this RFP. All materials and concepts included in the Proposals shall become the exclusive property of ARF. Selection or rejection of a Proposal shall not affect this right.

Gifts and Favors

Vendors shall not offer any gifts or favors of any kind to any employee or representative of ARF, regardless of the value, during the RFP process through contract completion.

4. Proposal Preparation and Delivery***Proposal Preparation and Response Format***

ARF's review of Proposals will be primarily focused on the information identified below. To allow an objective evaluation of all Proposals, Vendors must conform to the Response Formats and include all requested information. Failure to comply may result in rejection of the Proposal.

Please find an attached RFP response EXCEL file – at minimum respond in this format. Feel free to include additional documentation (.ppt, .doc, etc.) for your proposal. (see Deduplication RFP-Vendor NAME.xls.)

Most Favorable Terms

ARF reserves the right to make an award without further discussion or negotiation of the proposal submitted. Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms the Vendor can propose. Vendor should be prepared to accept their response to this RFP for incorporation into a contract. Contract negotiations may incorporate part or the Vendor's entire proposal. It is understood that the proposal will become a part of an official file on this matter without obligation to ARF.

Acceptance Period

Proposals should remain open and firm as an offer to contract through **09/01/08**.

Cost of Proposal Preparation and/or RFP Participation

Any and all costs incurred by the Vendor associated with preparation of Responses and/or participation in this RFP are entirely the responsibility of the Vendor and shall not be chargeable in any manner to ARF, including without limitation any technical gap analysis activity required prior to award.

Alternative Proposals

In addition to proposing to the specified requirements, Vendors are encouraged to provide **additional** alternative proposals for services which Vendor considers more cost effective than the processes procedures described herein. Recommended alternatives are to be identified as such along with the applicable cost differential and program impact for each alternative proposed.

Delivery Instructions

Proposals shall be delivered no later than by the due date noted above, 5:00 PM Pacific Time via email to bill@theARF.org .

Late submissions will not be accepted unless otherwise agreed by ARF; and the ARF accepts no liability for incomplete submissions, errors in transmission, late and/or misdirected transmissions.

5. ARF Review Process***Evaluation Criteria***

ARF shall have the sole right and option to use whatever evaluation and selection criteria it deems appropriate in selecting a Vendor; however, the following criteria will be strongly considered during such evaluation and selection: Vendor's ability to meet ARF's primary business objectives

- Vendor's ability to meet the requirements and service levels
- Vendor's overall business qualifications and industry knowledge
- Vendor's pricing proposal
- Vendor's agreement to ARF's contract requirements

An evaluation scorecard with more detailed criteria and relative importance measures will be circulated during the Q&A phase of the RFP process.

Bidder Presentations

If deemed necessary by ARF, Vendors may be requested to clarify their Proposal and/or present their proposal orally to ARF. ARF will notify Vendors in the event such a presentation is necessary.