

ARF RFP Questions and Responses

On behalf of the ARF Council for Online Research Quality and the entire industry, let me express our appreciation for your interest in this major research-on-research project and for indicating that your company will be submitting a proposal in response to one or more of the RFPs.

Due to the Fourth of July holiday weekend and to give each company ample opportunity to take into consideration the responses to the questions below, the deadline for submission of all proposals has been extended to 5:00PM/EST on Wednesday, July 23. Your company's proposal/s should be sent electronically to Bill Cook of the ARF (Bill@TheARF.org).

These are the questions regarding the RFPs.

All RFPs

- **Question:** When should the study be in field? **Response:** October 1 – November 1, 2008.
- **Question:** The NDA associated with the RFPs is not mutual and only protects ARF. Will ARF sign a *mutual* NDA to ensure that all the information shared is protected? **Response:** The ARF will sign a mutual NDA.
- **Question:** Will there be an opportunity to give presentations of capabilities to the Online Research Quality Council? **Response:** No. The proposal should be your company's opportunity to present capabilities.
- **Question:** Will there be an opportunity for the applicants to ask questions of the reviewers? **Response:** No. The opportunity was given to submit questions.
- **Question:** Can alternative approaches be submitted? **Response:** Creative approaches to address the specifics in the RFPs will be welcomed.
- **Question:** What is the timeline now with the submission extension? **Response:** All other dates remained unchanged.
- **Question:** Will the evaluation criteria be shared? **Response:** This is provided in the next section of this communication.
- **Question:** Are the 15 and 30 minute lengths absolutes or equivalents? **Response:** The RFP states that survey lengths are as measured for online surveys. We would expect issues associated with the "comparability" of the survey instrument across modes to be addressed when the survey is designed.
- **Question:** In regards to best practices and industry standards for telephone studies, how should incentives be handled? **Response:** The goal is to have the provider follow the typical practices their company uses when conducting market research among general consumers.
- **Question:** Will any of the surveys be in Spanish? **Response:** Interviews will be conducted in English.
- **Question:** What is the topic of the survey? **Response:** The questionnaire has not been designed yet.
- **Question:** What are the types of questions (e.g., check boxes, open ended)? **Response:** The questionnaire has not been designed yet.

De-Duplication RFP

- **Question:** In Section C – Scope of Work, the RFP states that de-duping can include: “One digital fingerprint with multiple panel IDs”. Why has the off-line sample been included? **Response:** If your company can include the off-line sample, then indicate that you have that capability.
- **Question:** When should the duplicates be indicated? **Response:** Flagging duplicate survey respondents can occur in real-time or during data processing.
- How should Section H of the deduplication RFP be interpreted? It states that, “[the] vendor hereby grants the ARF a worldwide, perpetual, unrestricted and royalty-free license to all materials, methodologies, technologies, and concepts included [herein].” **Response:** The ARF has the rights to the data, analysis, and interpretations and solutions. It does not apply to proprietary methods employed by the companies providing services.
- **Question:** Is the number of total panels to which each person belongs important? **Response:** That is one of the issues.

De-Duplication and E-Mail RFPs

- **Question:** Is the primary difference between the Dedupe and Matching RFPs that the first would measure overlap / duplication based on name / address while the second would do the same based on encrypted email address. Is that a correct interpretation? **Response:** The flagging of duplicates is based on respondents who complete a centrally hosted survey. The matching of encrypted e-mail address is conducted on a separate dataset defined as per the study description.

Data Hosting and Processing

- **Question:** Define ‘respondent errors’ under measures of survey-related incidental variables? **Response:** The specific respondent errors, navigational problems, inconsistencies, etc. to be measured will be defined during the design of the survey and final analytic plan. For the proposal, we are interested in a description of any and all capabilities to measure paradata and other survey-related incidental variables.
- **Question:** Item #1, page 3 states that “the DHP partner must be able to serve online surveys tailored to multiple visual, navigational, or other styles.” Should that include Flash-based survey experiences in a Java environment (or vice versa)? **Response:** The desire is to mirror as closely as possible the respondent’s usual experience.

Evaluation Criteria

To insure objectivity in the evaluation of all proposals, evaluation criteria were developed for each RFP. This will allow each reviewer to rate the proposals on similar criteria.

Dependent on relevance to the RFP, the criteria were generally divided into four sections: Business Objectives, Methodology, Qualifications and Industry Knowledge, and Professional Qualifications.

Business Objectives: Ability to Deliver on Time; References; Proposal Match to RFP Specs; Added Value beyond RFP Specs; Proven Track Record; Availability of Resources; Ease of Collaboration; Cost

Methodology (processes and practices, and technology to accomplish tasks): Comprehensiveness; Transparency; Objectivity, Independence, Security, Confidentiality; Report Accessibility; Scalability and Stability

Qualifications and Industry Knowledge: Proven Product; Relevant Experience; Appropriate Legal/Privacy/Security Safeguards

Professional Qualifications: Research Associations Membership and Involvement; Qualifications of Project Leads.

Conclusion

Our continual goal was to develop a process that would be open, objective, and timely resulting in a major industry study. Hopefully, this will be the first of several such studies. If your company is not selected for this project, we encourage you to participate in the activities of the ARF Online Research Quality Council and assist in the next round of studies.

Co-Chairs of the Define Quality Committee of the ARF ORQC:

Dr Tom Evans, Efrain Ribeiro, and Renee Smith