

**REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)
for
PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH**

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INTRODUCTION AND TIMELINE

The Pierce County Library System (“Library”) invites proposals from qualified firms to develop and conduct public opinion research for the Library. The resulting project will provide information and knowledge of the public’s changing expectations, needs, and value of a public library.

Library Vision Statement

The community of Pierce County thrives on inclusion, curiosity, and connection.

Library Mission Statement

To empower the people of Pierce County by advancing all forms of literacy, championing access to information, creating inclusive and inspired spaces, and enriching lives.

The Library is a junior taxing district under the laws of the State of Washington established in 1946 as a rural library district under Chapter 27.12 RCW. The Library provides library services for the residents of unincorporated Pierce County, 15 annexed cities and towns (Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Edgewood, Fife, Gig Harbor, Lakewood, Milton, Orting, South Prairie, Steilacoom, Sumner, University Place, and Wilkeson). The total estimated population served is 680,000. More information about the Library may be found online at <https://mypcls.org/>.

Thank you for your interest in proposing excellent public opinion research/polling for the Library. The purpose of this RFQ is for public opinion research to be delivered in a professional manner in accordance with the specifications contained in this RFQ.

The Library continually engages with the public to gain input for library services, programs, and buildings/facilities. With a goal of a biennial cadence, the Library conducts public opinion research to gather the public’s awareness and preference for the Library. This RFQ provides a background of the Library and a description of its public opinion research goals.

The Library seeks to contract the services of a vendor to develop and conduct public opinion research of a subset of adults, representative of the diversity of the Library’s 1,800 square-mile service area, with a data report and research analysis of the findings. With deference to the selected public opinion research firm, the Library is interested in quantitative data, representative of the Library’s service area.

The public opinion research will build on public opinion research/polls the Library conducted in 2023, retaining research gathered at that time, for ongoing comparative purposes. Although, the selected vendor is not limited to conducting public opinion solely focused on quantitative data, the selected vendor will compare results from the 2023 public opinion research with findings in the 2025 public opinion research. To summarize, the Library would entertain proposals including qualitative research methodology, however, that is not the focus of this public opinion research.

The final deliverable product for the public opinion researcher is a data report and research analysis of the findings, presented to the principal for the project, the Library Marketing and Communications Director with additional audiences, which may include the Library’s Administrative Team and/or its Board of Trustees.

The Library encourages qualified proposals from minority- and women-owned businesses. Resources to assist such proposers can be found at <https://omwbe.wa.gov>, the website for the Washington State Office of Minority & Women’s Business Enterprises.

Anticipated Timeline

RFQ announcement.....	February 3, 2025
Final questions due.....	February 14, 2025, 5 p.m.,Pacific Time (PT)
RFQ responses due from Library	February 21, 2025, 5 p.m. PT
RFQ responses due to Library.....	February 28, 2025, 5 p.m. PT
Virtual interviews of select respondents.....	March 17-21, 2025
Projected date to award	April 1, 2025
Develop, conduct, analyze, report public opinion research.....	April-August 2025
Potential extension to agreement.....	Through November 30, 2025

BRAND, PROMISE, POSITION, AND PERSONALITY

The Library’s position is to ignite the spark for the many successes of Pierce County residents and communities. Its value and benefit to the public is free, convenient, and welcoming access to learning, reading, and connecting communities.

The Library’s brand promise is to be a valued asset, collaborate with communities, and be a leader to foster the love of reading and lifelong learning.

The Library’s personality is smart, fun, friendly, and open to new ideas.

The Library markets in venues and with messages showing how the valued community asset collaborates to bring people and ideas together in a smart, fun, and friendly manner.

PUBLIC AUDIENCES OF LIBRARY

- Public-Pierce County residents
- Community leaders
- Local government elected officials and administrators
- News media
- Partners
- Friends of the Library
- Pierce County Library Foundation Board of Directors, donors, and prospects
- Pierce County Library staff
- Pierce County Library's Board of Trustees

Key Audiences/Target Markets

- Customers and potential customers, with specific emphasis to reach the following:
 - Individuals and families who are asset limited or Asset Limited, Income Constrained, and Employed (ALICE). United Ways of the Pacific Northwest's 2023 "ALICE in the Crosscurrents: COVID and Financial Hardship in Washington" showed in 2021 8%-28,763 of households living in poverty (in the 2019 report 12%-28,263 were found to be living in poverty and in 2021 23%-78,719 of households were identified as ALICE (2019: 22%-65,166) in Pierce County. These numbers include Tacoma and all of Pierce County, not only the Library's service area.
 - Diverse communities. The U.S. Census Bureau shows the following for diversity in Pierce County, as of 2022: data shows 12% Hispanic or Latinx, 8% Black, and 7% Asian race and ethnicity. These numbers include Tacoma and all of Pierce County, not only the Library's service area.
- Community leaders

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Library seeks a firm to develop, conduct, analyze, and report on the public's awareness and preference for the Pierce County Library System. The research would build upon the Library's 2023 poll, with an emphasis in gaining and understanding the public's value for the Library as a visitor/user/potential visitor/user of library services and/or their value for the Library as an asset to their community.

The market research will discern information and knowledge of the public's changing expectations, needs, and value of a public library.

Desired outcomes from the public opinion research include the following:

- Determine baseline for brand awareness and preference.
- Gain and understand the public's value for the Library as a cardholder/potential cardholder and/or their value for the Library as an asset to their community.
- Discern barriers to awareness and use of library services.
- Test messages.
- Potentially include questions regarding rebranding.
- Potentially include questions regarding facilities/buildings.

PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH GOALS

1. Learn the public's awareness and preference for the Library.
2. Ascertain the public's value for the Library, for themselves, for their community.
3. Understand barriers to the public accessing and using library services.
4. Deliver replicable public opinion research, which the Library can build upon in 2027, as part of its biennial cadence for public opinion research.

SCOPE OF WORK

The firm will work with Library's Marketing and Communications Director as its primary point of contact to develop, conduct, analyze, and report on the public opinion research. The firm may coordinate with other members of the Library's Administrative Team, who will be key in collaborating on the survey content. Key Timeline Dates for overall public opinion research appear below. Please note, the Library values respondents' assessment as to the realism and attainability of the projected timeline.

Activity	Timeline
Kickoff meeting	April 2025
Marketing and Communications Director will provide 2025 public opinion surveys and other available materials researcher requests	April 2025
Methodology determined	April 2025
Survey implement(s) and questionnaire created	May 2025
Survey participants identified	May 2025
Survey conducted	June 2025
Data compiled and analyzed	July 2025
Report presented	August 2025

DELIVERABLES

Researcher will provide the Library with methodology, questionnaire, and report with data and analysis. Components will include:

- Timeline for development, execution, analysis, and report.
- Methodology.
- Questionnaire.
- Survey candidates (the list of candidates will not be provided to Library, however researcher will provide the Library with thorough understanding of origination and gain Library's agreement of candidate pool source).

For the data and analysis report, components will include:

- Minimum of two print copies; one bound and one unbound report.
- Electronic copy of report.
- Presentation of summary of report.

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) **QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RFQ.** All questions about this RFQ should be directed to Marketing and Communications Director Mary Getchell by email to mgetchell@piercecounitylibrary.org or by phone at 253-548-3428. The Library reserves the right to share answers with other proposers, if such information is necessary to proposers in submitting responses or if the lack of such information would be prejudicial to uninformed proposers. **All questions must be submitted by February 14, 2025, 5 p.m., PT.**
- b) **BID SUBMISSION.** To be considered, proposers must submit five (5) complete copies of their responses in a sealed envelope. The responses shall be addressed as follows:
Pierce County Library System
Attention: Petra McBride
3005 112th Street East
Tacoma, WA 98446-2215
Sealed Response for: Public Opinion Research
Alternatively, an email response will be considered as an alternative submission method. If so, send all submission materials to pmcbride@piercecounitylibrary.org with the subject line of "Response for: Public Opinion Research".
- c) **DATE OF SUBMISSION. SEALED/EMAIL RESPONSES MUST BE SUBMITTED NO LATER THAN 5 P.M., PT, ON February 28, 2025.** Submissions received late may be deemed not responsive and may not be considered, at the Library's discretion. The Library reserves the right to extend the date of submission and will provide due notice of such date extension.
- d) **SIGNATURE.** A corporate official who is authorized to make such commitments must sign the response.
- e) **WITHDRAWAL OR MODIFICATIONS OF RESPONSE.** The proposer may, without prejudice, modify or withdraw their response by written request, provided that the response and any withdrawal request are received by the Library prior to the date of submission above. Following the withdrawal of a response, the proposer may submit a new response provided it is received by the Library at the address and by the Date of Submission.
- f) **REJECTION OF RESPONSE.** The Library reserves the right to reject any and all responses without penalty and for any cause.
- g) **NON-DISCRIMINATION AND WORKPLACE SAFETY:** The Consultant agrees to abide by all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations prohibiting discrimination in employment and the controlling of workplace safety. Any violations of applicable laws, rules, or regulations may result in termination of this contract.

- h) **RFQ TAKES PRECEDENCE:** The contents of the proposal and accompanying response of the selected consultant, specifically including those parts that deal with contractual requirements, purchases, fees, or contract prices, and official published specifications may become contractual obligations, and may be made part of the final contract. Failure of the selected consultant to accept these obligations in a purchase agreement, purchase order, delivery, or similar acquisition instrument may result in cancellation of the award.
- i) **VALIDITY OF PRICE QUOTATIONS:** Consultant(s) must confirm in writing that prices quoted will be valid and in effect for a minimum of ninety (90) days after proposal opening, and through the duration of the project.
- j) **AWARD OF CONTRACT:** The contract shall be awarded to the responsive, responsible consultant who best meets the Library's need and interests. Each response shall be evaluated on a number of criteria, to include cost, performance, references, and other qualities the Library deems necessary to select the most qualified proposer. The Library will submit a Notice of Intent to Award to the apparent successful proposer (researcher) by April 1, 2025. Only one award will be made. The Library reserves the right to waive all technicalities, irregularities, and deviations of proposals from the RFQ, and to be the final judge as to which proposal is accepted. Award is anticipated no later than thirty (30) days after RFQ closing. The Library reserves the right to extend the timeline and scope of project.
- k) **CONSULTANT'S COST TO DEVELOP AND PRESENT PROPOSAL:** Costs for developing and presenting proposals in response to this RFQ are entirely the obligation of the consultant and shall not be chargeable in any manner to the Library.
- l) **CONTRACT NEGOTIATION:** The finalist will be expected to enter negotiations for pricing and other contractual terms. Failure to complete negotiations will result in disqualification of the consultant's proposal and quotation. Upon conclusion of negotiations and by approval given by the Library's Executive Director or Library Board of Trustees, the Library and the consultant may enter into a mutually agreed contractual agreement.
- m) **PUBLIC DISCLOSURE OF AWARDED PROPOSAL:** All proposals will be treated with confidentiality prior to award. After award of the proposal, the proposal will fall under the Public Records Act requirement of Washington State law (Chapter 42.56 RCW) that obligates the Library to make the document available for public inspection, if requested.
- n) **INSURANCE:** The winning consultant shall provide a current Certificate of Insurance to the Library prior to the project's commencement date. Such certificate shall include limits for liability, automobile, errors/omissions, and all insurance policies shall be endorsed with the following declaration, "Pierce County Library System officials and employees are covered as additional insured."

- o) **PAYMENT:** The Consultant will submit invoices in accordance with a negotiated contract with payment due within thirty (30) days. Consultant must be able to accept credit cards for payment of invoices. The Library will make payments upon delivery and acceptance of the services by the Library and upon receipt of an acceptable invoice.
- p) **TAXES:** Vendor shall include applicable taxes on all invoices, and Library shall make payment to Vendor for said taxes. It is Vendor's sole responsibility to ensure all taxes are paid in accordance to all applicable laws.
- q) **CANCELLATION.** The Library may cancel any subsequent Agreement or any part thereof by written notice at any time without penalty if the Vendor fails to comply with the terms, instructions, specifications, and delivery completion dates, or fail to perform the services with diligence.
- r) **AGREEMENT ADMINISTRATOR.** The administrator of this Agreement will be: the Library's Marketing and Communications Director.

REFERENCES

Provide a list of three (3) similar projects and services your company has performed within the last ten (10) years. Include names, addresses, and phone numbers of clients for whom work was done, placing particular emphasis on services provided to libraries or public sector organizations. Include samples of the work on flash drive or website links.

Company: _____ **Address:** _____

Contact: _____

Principal in Charge: _____ **Project Lead:** _____

Phone: _____

Project and Services provided: _____

Website link: _____

Company: _____ **Address:** _____

Contact: _____

Principal in Charge: _____ Project Lead: _____

Phone: _____

Project and Services provided: _____

Website link: _____

Company: _____ **Address:** _____

Contact: _____

Principal in Charge: _____ Project Lead: _____

Phone: _____

Project and Services provided: _____

Website link: _____

COMPANY INFORMATION

Please provide enough information about your company to give us an understanding of its qualifications for providing public opinion research/polling, including links or copies of research you've developed and conducted and information about your role in the research/polling. Please provide information as follows, using this form or an attachment, referencing answers to each item below.

1. Provide a description of your company's qualifications, credentials, experience, and resources in public opinion research/polling in particular, for public organizations or libraries.
2. Provide an overall description of the approach you intend to use in conducting the project. Include a timeline resulting in completion of project in the August 2025 timeframe.
3. Describe how you work with your client and ensure you are meeting your client's needs.

PRICE/COST STRUCTURE AND PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Provide a fee and price structure for completion of the services included in the Project Description, Scope of Work, and Deliverables sections. Include detail costs to accomplish this work. Provide attachments as necessary.

PROJECTED TIMELINE

Provide a timeline based upon the projected timeline noted in the Anticipated Timeline and Scope of Work sections, for activities and milestones required to develop and conduct the public opinion research. Provide attachments as necessary.

AGREEMENT

Contained in this section are the general terms that will become part of an agreement. Other terms may be included in the final agreement, including Vendor's terms and conditions in providing public opinion research services.

- a) **PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:** The initial period of performance of this Agreement is April 1, 2025 through August 31, 2025. This period of performance may be extended as provided in Agreement Extension below.
- b) **AGREEMENT EXTENSION:** The Agreement period may be extended through November 30, 2025, in accordance with the best interest and the sole option of the Library and with proper notice provided in writing. Requests for any Agreement changes are made in writing to the Marketing and Communications Director. Any agreed upon change shall take effect at the time of the Agreement extension and shall remain in effect throughout the extension period.

The undersigned proposer declares that they have read and fully understands the Request for Qualifications and agrees to all of the terms contained herein; and they propose and agree that if their response be accepted, they will enter into an Agreement to perform in accordance with the specifications. Any pricing provided is to include and cover all materials and labor to complete the job to the Library's satisfaction.

Signature of Authorized Representative

Email Address

Printed Name

Street Address

Title

City, State, Zip Code

Date

Phone