REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS – Q?rius Educator

STATEMENT OF WORK

1. Project Summary

The Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) seeks a contract educator to support the Office of Education & Outreach by leading and facilitating programs and experiences for school groups in Q?rius, a 10,000 square foot innovative and interactive programming space in the museum. Service is needed approximately 40 hours/week, Monday through Friday. The period of performance is anticipated to begin on or around September 12, 2016 and be completed no later than June 16, 2017.

2. Context: Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History

The Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History, located at 10th Street and Constitution Avenue N.W. in Washington, D.C., is the most-visited natural history museum in the world. Opened in 1910, the green-domed museum on the National Mall is dedicated to maintaining and preserving the world’s most extensive collection of natural history specimens and cultural artifacts. It fosters significant scientific research and educational programs and exhibitions that present the work of its scientists to the public.

The museum is regarded as a global leader in natural history collections, collections-based research, scientific discovery, and natural history exhibition. The current and ongoing restructuring of the Office of Education & Outreach is part of an institution-wide effort to promote the education and outreach activities of the museum to the rigor and renown of its scientific activities. A related intent is to advance the impact that the museum has on its visitors and in the field of museum education, particularly the integration of research and practice in an institutional setting. We seek to improve onsite and online public access to collections, research, and researchers, increase opportunities to develop and use the skills and processes that scientists use to study NMNH collections, and foster an environment that encourages connections to science, collections, and scientists in personally and socially relevant contexts.

3. Context: Q?rius

To work toward this end, the museum has developed an innovative, 10,000 square foot interactive programming space developed and operated by the Office of Education & Outreach. In Q?rius, visitors to NMNH have access to a 6,000 specimen collection representing all the research departments in the museum and a broad slate of interactive, participatory, and engaging
program options ranging from self-guided discovery activities to participating with SI scientists in their research programs.

**Outcomes for Q?rius Experiences**
The overarching goals for Q?rius are 1) to inspire responsible citizens who are aware of current issues related to the natural and cultural world, understand their role in addressing those issues, and participate in experiences that inspire stewardship, conservation, and protection of natural and cultural diversity, and 2) to build new youth audiences and increase youth participation in a continuum of opportunities that inspire, nurture, grow and diversify the next generation of STEM professionals.

To deliver on these goals, Q?rius takes an experimental approach. We are building on existing or previous successful engagement and experience spaces and programs at NMNH (e.g., Discovery Room, Naturalist Center, Forensic Anthropology Lab), and we are learning from benchmarking, evaluation, and relationships with peer institutions.

The activities, experiences, programs, and spaces are designed to address the Q?rius goals by helping the target audience to achieve the following outcomes, which are the highest priority for evaluation:

- Imagine and explore new questions and curiosities about the natural world
- Expand awareness and understanding of connections with the natural world
- Engage in new dialogue about natural history topics and their relevance to life outside the museum (esp. with families, peers).
- Increase awareness of and interest in science careers
- Practice the skills of natural history science
- Increase awareness and understanding of NMNH research as relevant to daily life

**Q?rius School Experience Types**
To deliver on the goals and outcomes, NMNH offers structured, facilitated experiences for students in grades 6-12. The experiences have been designed to provide students with scaffolded learning about NMNH scientists and their researchers. Students will use scientific equipment, such as microscopes, along with objects and digital resources and tools (e.g., collections records, video) and build skills for natural history science. School programs are offered on most days during the school year (October through June).

4. **Deliverables and Tasks**

The tasks for this contract are divided into FIVE major categories.

a. **Teaching and Facilitation of Q?rius Educational Programs**
   - Lead and facilitate scheduled school experiences.

b. **Organization and Preparation for Q?rius Educational Programs**
   - Set up and break down school program sessions daily.
• Organize and prepare necessary paper materials, supplies, collections and equipment weekly for school programs.
• Assist with the development, editing and design of teacher materials to support field trip and classroom experiences and distribute to teachers as needed.
• Assist with the refinement of current Q?rius school programs.
• Assist with the coordination, preparation, and execution of Field Trip Days sponsored by Google.
• Collaborate with Education and Outreach staff to craft an assessment framework for school programs and develop a plan for ongoing assessment of current programs.
• Collaborate with NMNH staff with the development of new Q?rius school programs, both facilitated and self-guided, including instructional design, prototyping, and testing.
• Co-lead tracking and confirming school program registrations.
• Conduct phone and email correspondence about Q?rius school programs, assist with managing the NMNH School Programs resource email account and phone line.

c. School Program Volunteer Management
• Assist the Q?rius Volunteer Coordinator with the review of volunteer applications, and conduct interviews for school program volunteer applicants as needed.
• Assist the School Programs Coordinator and Q?rius Volunteer Coordinator with continuing education sessions around content and facilitation skills.
• Lead daily pre-brief/debrief meetings with school program volunteers.
• Assist with the development of an end-of-school-year reflection meeting for school program volunteers, educators and School Programs Coordinator.
• Report all activity and feedback to School Programs Coordinator in order to refine volunteer management and ongoing training.
• Refine and edit the policy and procedure manual for management of school program volunteers to supplement policies and procedures for Q?rius volunteers as needed.
• Contribute to and implement an appropriate rotation and scheduling strategy for school program volunteers.

d. School Programs Administration
• Assist in the development and implementation of school programs marketing plans and development and the distribution of promotional materials.
• Assist in the development of an outreach plan for promoting and informing Washington DC area teachers of the educational opportunities available for school groups at NMNH and Q?rius.
• Implement outreach efforts to Washington DC area teachers by visiting schools, attending events, conducting tours and special programs, among other opportunities.
• Assist in the planning, coordination, and implementation of special events onsite at NMNH for students and/or teachers as needed.
• Provide feedback to NMNH staff about school programs and recommend and implement adjustments to content or logistics.
• Assist in the development of school program evaluation tools and methods for collecting regular teacher feedback.
• Submit weekly written reports summarizing the educational programming and reflections on practice. The reports will be due no later than close of business on Wednesdays.
• Enter weekly and monthly school group visitation numbers for Q?rius school programs into the Smithsonian Institution’s EDGE system.
• Contribute to mid-year and end of year reports on school programs.

e. Other duties as assigned
• Attend regular check-in meetings with Education and Outreach staff.
• Collaborate with Youth Programs to help find alignments, efficiencies and opportunities shared between Youth and School Programs.
• Support learning in Q?rius by consulting with colleagues on programming, learning goals, best practices and audiences; work on the floor of Q?rius when the space is short-staffed.

Deliverables

• Weekly written reports summarizing the educational programming and reflections on practice. The reports will be due no later than close of business on Wednesdays.
• Weekly and monthly reports of school group visitation to the Smithsonian Institution’s EDGE system.
• Bi-weekly check-in meetings with other Q?rius Educators and the School Programs Coordinator.
• Policy and procedure manual for management of school program volunteers to supplement policies and procedures for Q?rius volunteers.
• Plan for engaging school program volunteers in daily briefing sessions and end-of-school-year reflection.
• Plan for implementing ongoing or regular assessment of current school programs.

5. Requirements

Required Qualifications include:
• Minimum of Bachelor's Degree including coursework in the natural sciences, education, museum education or related field required.
• Background in and/or passion for science or anthropology.
• Experience and enthusiasm for working with students; school faculty and staff.
• Enthusiasm for working with a diversity of students, scientists, museum educators and other museum staff.
• Knowledge and skill in oral, written and digital communication sufficient to address varied audiences and to serve as an interface between multiple museum constituents and stakeholders.
• Outstanding organizational skills and demonstrated ability to follow procedures and policies to maintain safety and security at an institution.

Desired Qualifications include:
• Master’s Degree in Museum Education, Museum Studies, or Education.
• Ability to speak Spanish is a plus.
• Experience with, or working knowledge of design software: InDesign; Illustrator; Photoshop etc. is a plus.

6. Scope and Timeframe

All project tasks and deliverables will begin no later than September 12, 2016 and be completed no later than June 16, 2017.

7. Place of Performance

The nature of the tasks and deliverables demands that this work will be conducted onsite at the NMNH, in a learning center and office environment. No travel costs will be reimbursed.

Contractor will work in a team environment with staff, volunteers and interns.

8. Schedule

Contractor must be available to work onsite at the National Museum of Natural History. Contractor must work 40 hours per week Monday through Friday, 9:00am-5:00pm.

PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS:

General. On or before 5:00 PM in the vendor’s time zone on July 29, 2016, Offerors will be expected to provide a proposal in its entirety, via email to Nicole Webster, School Programs Coordinator, nmnhschoolprograms@si.edu. At the minimum, offerors need to demonstrate that they meet the acceptability standards for non-cost factors, including that they have the ability to perform the requirements in a timely manner.

Proposal Checklist:

• Full Name, Street Address, Telephone Number

• Plan of Accomplishment
  You should describe your plan for completing all work requested in two to five paragraphs. This narrative explanation should include your approach to the tasks and deliverables, and how you will proceed with the project to ensure it is completed on time.

• Capability to Perform
  1-2 paragraphs about your ability to perform the work required, in terms of current availability, skills and ability to complete this project on schedule.
Resume(s)
Include your resume.

Experience
Provide up to 5 examples of specialized experience and demonstrated technical competence in performing similar work as requested here, preferably completed within the last five years.

Cost Proposal
Cost Proposals should address pricing of all of the work outlined in this proposal for the amount of time specified. The price proposals should be all-inclusive (for example, you would not say that travel will be billed as needed). **Total cost is not the exceed $36,000.**

Recommended
- DUNS Number
  - A DUNS number is a unique nine digit identification number available for each physical location of your business and is needed to register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system. DUNS numbers are provided through Dun and Bradstreet at no charge. You may contact Dun and Bradstreet to obtain DUNS numbers by toll free telephone call to 1-866-705-5711 or on the internet at [http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp](http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp). Obtaining a DUNS Number prior to interviewing will help to expedite the application process.

Proposal Evaluation
Proposals shall be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria being applied to the information requested above:

“Plan of Accomplishment” and “Capability to Perform” shall be granted equal weight and shall together be granted more weight than “Staffing,” and “Experience.” “Staffing” and “Experience” shall be granted equal weight. All evaluation factors other than cost, when combined, are granted more weight than cost.

Award of a contract shall be made to the responsive, responsible offeror, whose combined cost and technical proposal is, in the opinion of the Contracting Officer, determined to be the most advantageous and in the best interest of the Smithsonian Institution.

Inquiries
Inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals should be directed via email to Nicole Webster at nmnhschoolprograms@si.edu with the subject line “Q?rius Educator Inquiry”.

Interviews
It is the intention of the Smithsonian to interview a select group of responsive offerors; however, it is possible that interviews may not occur. Consequently, it is important that all responses to this request be complete and include all necessary information.

Submission of Proposals
The Smithsonian reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received in response to this request, and to negotiate separately with any offeror when such action shall be considered by the Contracting Officer to be in the best interest of the Smithsonian. After limited negotiations or
based solely on initial offers received, notice will be provided indicating that an award may be made. It is therefore emphasized that all proposals should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms that the offeror can submit. Written proposals must be received 5:00 PM in the offeror’s time zone, on July 29, 2016.

**Disposition of Proposals**

All information submitted in response to this Request for Proposal shall become the property of the Smithsonian and shall not be returned.