Statement of Work (SOW)
Education Contractor

8/05/2019
National Museum of Natural History
Office of Education

BACKGROUND
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.

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.

SCOPE
The Smithsonian’s National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) seeks a contract educator to support the Office of Education & Outreach by providing educational services in support of the implementation of programming for Washington, DC-area high school youth, in Q?rius, the Coralyn Whitney Science Education Center. The work would begin on or around August 29, 2019 and be completed no later than August 28, 2020. In total, the contractor will work 1,100 hours.

OBJECTIVES
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

**NMNH Youth Programs**

The National Museum of Natural History (NMNH) offers a variety of youth programs to further the Museum’s mission to engage young people in the exploration of the natural world and their place in it. Each program uses different formats and methodologies for engaging pre-teen and teen audiences with STEM: mentorships, career immersion and community outreach, science communication training and peer-to-peer interaction, youth involvement in creating science learning experiences, science career exploration for middle school youth, a key age for hooking teens on science careers, interdisciplinary art-science-design-engineering-technology maker workshops and daily participatory programs and activities in Q?rius.

**The Q?Crew Youth Volunteer Program**

The Q?Crew Youth Volunteer Program is an exciting opportunity for local Washington, DC area youth to play an essential role in transitioning NMNH to a place where high school-aged youth want to spend their time – where they feel comfortable to explore science and experience what it’s like to engage in science in their own way. Youth volunteers facilitate a range of experiences with Q?rius visitors as their area of focus, including simulations of scientific excursions that recreate the work of NMNH scientists at field sites around the world; tactile exploration, hypothesis formation, observation, and analysis using a fully accessible 6,000 object collection, and facilitating conversations with scientists about the connections between our lives and scientific research in areas such as invasive species, climate change, biodiversity loss, and language revitalization.
TASKS
The contractor shall provide the necessary labor to assist in the coordination of the Youth Volunteer Program as outlined here:

- Assist in the recruitment and marketing for the Q?Crew Volunteer Program to target audiences, especially teens from underserved populations.
- Assist the selection of the 2019 cohort of Q?Crew volunteer and Captains, including processing, review and ranking of applications; maintaining communication between museum and applicants and scheduling in-person interviews.
- Assist with the registration of new participants into the Q?Crew program
- Assist in the maintenance of a database of youth applicants and participants
- Provide logistical support for supplies, equipment, space, food and transportation as needed
- Assist with the coordination of the creation and delivery of a digital newsletter to Q?Crew Teen Volunteers about upcoming events and news.
- Help coordinate and implement training of new Q?Crew and assist in the main Q?rius volunteer training, providing support to youth volunteers during this integration.
- Assist in the development and implementation of continuing education sessions to enhance volunteer skills and knowledge such as behind-the-scene tours, field trips to other Smithsonian units and digital skills training sessions, contributing to the integration of specialized Natural History and science content into trainings.
- Serve as a floater during teen volunteer shifts, checking in on teens at their work stations, understanding that some teens need guidance more than others. Remind teen volunteers of their duties and responsibilities.
- Assist the Youth Volunteer Coordinator in regular assessments and check-ins with teen volunteer cohort to assess their progress in program. Report all activity and feedback as requested by Youth Volunteer Coordinator and Manager of School and Youth Programs.
- Identify and resolve volunteer concerns and questions.
- Act as a point of contact for teens and parents.
- Accurately keep track of schedules, rotations and document teen participation through digital badging system and other tools.
- Assist in documenting Q?Crew happenings through photographs and video and organizing and reporting data about teens’ work and interaction with visitors.
- Work with the Youth Programs staff to determine best audience engagement strategies and help prepare activities for special events and Youth socials.

DELIVERABLES
- Weekly email reports outlining all tasks accomplished to manager
- Weekly meetings with Youth Volunteer Coordinator and Manager of Youth and School Programs as required.
- Monthly: Organized media documentation of Q?Crew (photos, screen shots, video and testimonials)
• Assist with the bi-weekly digital newsletter for Q?Crew members

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE
Contractor must be available to work onsite at the National Museum of Natural History.

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE
Contractor must work 20 hours per week including 9:15-5:15 on Friday and Saturday. The scheduling of the additional 4 hours is flexible and can be selected in consultation with the Manager of School and Youth Programs. Contractor must be able to work during time periods when Q?Crew volunteers are off from school including Thanksgiving, Winter and Spring Breaks. Contractor will be required to work one full 40 hour week June 29, 2020-July 3, 2020. The contract must also work up to 5 Sundays including September 15th and 22nd. All tasks and deliverables will begin upon approval of contract and end no later than August 29, 2020. In total, the contractor will work 1,100 hours.