



RFI 2478 Addendum #1, Attachment-1, Questions and Answers	
Question	Answer
1 Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)	At this time there is nothing to apply for. This is a Request for Information (RFI) only. Anyone from within or outside of the United States can respond to this RFI.
2 Whether we need to come over there for meetings?	There will be no meetings for this RFI. During future procurement activities, meetings can be held in person and/or via remote teleconferencing.
3 Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)	There will be no tasks performed for this RFI. Work related to a future procurement, can indeed be performed outside the USA.
4 Can we submit the proposals via email?	The responses should be submitted via email.
5 Regarding question 5 below in red, what owned social and digital channels will be available to promote this campaign? 5. What approaches can be used in creating content to maximize effects on social and digital media?	If by "owned channels" this question is referring to OCM operated channels, the OCM website ( <a href="https://cannabis.ny.gov/">https://cannabis.ny.gov/</a> ) and future OCM social media channels can be leveraged for dissemination purposes. Partner state agencies can also share through their websites and social media accounts as well. Vendor can recommend which social media platforms could be most beneficial to utilize.
6 You wrote that your target is women and minorities under the age of 21, but you also wrote that you want a campaign focused on "adult cannabis consumers with messages about why to purchase legal cannabis (vs. from the illicit market) and focusing on harm reduction and safe use messages." Can you clarify your target audience?	Given the seismic shift in policy that the legalization of adult-use cannabis presents, NYS will ultimately need to reach all populations via public education campaigns. Please include information on your agency's experience and ability to focus on each of the identified targeted populations and topics.
7 If you are targeting individuals under 21, I promise they are not on network or cable TV. They are on streaming platforms. If we come back with a plan that does not include television, will we be disqualified?	Part of the intent ultimately of future RFPs will be to select a vendor that recommends the best type of media for the campaign audience. Each agency should recognize and identify which platforms make the most sense for each target population.
8 In question 7 below you talk about content placement. Content means different things to different people. When you say content, do you mean all marketing assets (social, digital, out of home)? 7. What approaches can be used in terms of content placement to reach hard-to-reach populations for each of the aforementioned campaigns?	This question is in reference to all media platforms and how best to tailor content for each population identified.
9 Can you give me an example of a clinician group in question 8 below in red? 8. What resources and materials should be created for local, community, and clinician groups to be able to leverage and promote campaign messages?	Clinician groups include medical providers, WIC providers and substance use disorder prevention/treatment providers.
10 When you say outside evaluation data below in question 10, do you mean 3rd party data analytics software? 10. How can outside evaluation data be utilized to quickly evolve campaign messages to maximize impacts on the desired behavior(s).	Question 10 refers to data monitoring/surveillance data (i.e. surveys, focus groups), data from a third party campaign evaluator, as well as campaign data points such as the number of impressions, etc. An evaluator would be testing the effectiveness of the campaigns message.
11 Will the vendor assess on their own or be provided by OCM the current behaviors, statistics and overall landscape that has precipitated the need for this type of campaign? See question 12 in red below. 12. Describe how market research and analysis will be utilized to provide information about specific target audiences and the subsequent needs to drive behavior change, including market segmentation, most effective media type and placement, how to best position messages relative to other marketing and advertising efforts, and the relative merit of selected strategies and messages?	Public health data includes but is not limited to cannabis use patterns, demographics, behavior at point of sale, risk behavior and health outcomes which will be provided by OCM as baseline metrics. Media marketing data will be expected from the vendor who is ultimately selected via RFP.
12 Regarding question 18 below. What are your KPI's for this campaign? I am not talking about Facebook likes or website visits, I mean, how will you know that this campaign changed behavior? How will the OCM see that these behaviors have changed and that this campaign worked in the long-term? Cannabis is not meth or crack, where less needles on the sidewalk or less overdoses can be quantified by looking out of the windows or data from hospitals and clinics. 18. How is effective diversity marketing measured?	Key performance indicators will be identified in partnership with the vendor ultimately selected through an RFP based on which subject(s)/population(s) will be prioritized first.
13 What is the estimated funding source, or budget for this project?	There is no budgetary information at this time.
14 Has funding for a formal solicitation been secured?	No.
15 Based on the RFI document, it looks like this is a new requirement and there isn't a vendor currently providing this service. Is this correct?	Yes.
16 What prompted this request for information?	On March 31st, 2021 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) legalizing adult-use cannabis (also known as marijuana or recreational marijuana) in New York State. The legislation creates a new Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) governed by a Cannabis Control Board to oversee and implement the law. Due to the change in the legality of adult-use cannabis a public education campaign is necessary to educate the public on the new law and available evidence on cannabis use.
17 When is the public education campaign expected to launch?	The exact date of the public education campaign launch is unknown at this time and will depend on when the RFP is released and the time it takes to develop the campaign.
18 Has OGS received any responses yet, and is OGS doing any outreach to solicit responses?	That is the purpose of this RFI.
19 What's the annual net media budget?	There is no budgetary information at this time.
20 Do you have a local preference or are you open to an agency located on the east coast of Canada that works with clients across North America for engagements of this nature?	Anyone from within or outside of the United States can respond to this RFI.
21 We assume there is a need to also answer the items in #2 for our response?	Yes.
22 As we are an agency that delivers a variety of services could you clarify/elaborate on the product background component we are to respond on?	Please respond to all elements of the RFI. Indicate any areas where your agency has expertise.
23 Do you have a budget at this time you are working with and/or are verifying with the responses you are to receive?	There is no budgetary information at this time.
24 How does NYS define "at-risk youth" regarding age range and other demographic or socioeconomic qualifiers?	Youth who may have had adverse childhood experiences, who are LGBT, who are engaged in risk taking behaviors, who are older in age, who experience high levels of stress, have other substance use or have peers with other substance use, etc. See these studies for more information: <a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6591884/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6591884/</a> <a href="https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/208413">https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapsychiatry/fullarticle/208413</a>
25 While the budget has not been specified, is there a correlation to any legislation? Is there a chance the budget may increase or decrease during the run of the campaign?	There is no budgetary information at this time. On March 31st, 2021 Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA) legalizing adult-use cannabis (also known as marijuana or recreational marijuana) in New York State. This RFI is designed to learn more about agencies that are able to support the development of a public health educational campaign to educate target populations about the MRTA and adult-use cannabis.

26	A list of questions has been provided in Section 2: Desired Knowledge. Are you expecting a response to each of those questions as part of this RFI? Or, are you looking for a response to the questions in Section 3: Content of Response ONLY, with some reference back to criteria mentioned in section 2? It seems that section 2 is the level of detail required for the RFP stage. Please clarify.	The purpose of this RFI is to gain as much knowledge as possible. Answers to all or most questions is desired.
27	Once this progresses to the RFP stage, do you intend to award the entire project to a single agency, or is there a possibility the work will be divided across multiple agencies? (i.e., media agency vs. research agency vs. branding agency, and/or agencies specializing in diversity vs. those specializing in public outreach, etc.)	Preference will be given to an agency that can either accomplish all of these tasks or subcontract to other partners when necessary.
28	What is the estimated start date of the intended campaign(s) outlined in the RFI? What is the duration? Or is timing predicated on the winning agency's recommendation to do a single umbrella brand campaign versus multiple campaigns?	The exact date of the public education campaign launch is unknown at this time and will depend on when the RFP is released and the time it takes to develop the campaign.
29	Are you looking for one agency that has the capabilities to handle all activities listed in the RFI?	Preference will be given to an agency that can either accomplish all of these tasks or subcontract to other partners when necessary.
30	Would you be open to having an agency respond to only some RFI parts in which it has expertise?	The purpose of this RFI is to gain as much knowledge as possible. Answers to all or most questions is desired.
31	What percentage of the budget will be dedicated to advertising and what would be dedicated to communications (earned media/PR)?	There is no budgetary information at this time.
32	Are you only interested in agencies that have specific past experience with Cannabis or can it be broader health experience?	Past experience does not have to be exclusive to cannabis but please explain how your agency's experience may have prepared you for the development of a cannabis public education campaign.
33	Can Pollock Communications be added to a contact list so that we are notified if/when an RFP is issued?	Yes. An email will be sent out notifying all potential vendors that the solicitation has been posted to the OGS Bid Calendar at <a href="https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities">https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities</a> . You can also sign up to the NYS Contract Reporter to receive notifications of future solicitations at <a href="https://www.nyscr.ny.gov/">https://www.nyscr.ny.gov/</a> .
34	We understand that all questions and responses will be posted via Addendum to the OGS Bid Calendar website found at <a href="https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities">https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities</a> . Can you tell us when they will be posted?	Answers will be posted as soon as they are available.
35	The RFI provides 18 questions that OCM seeks information on, and then a separate eight bullet points for the content of the RFI response. In which section of the RFI should respondents provide information on the 18 areas of information? If it is up to the responder how to address each of these 18 questions, does OCM have a preferred outline for the response?	Please respond to all elements of the RFI as clearly as possible. There is no preference on format.
36	Are there any page limits to this response?	No.
37	In 1.2 Project Background/Mission, the RFI lists "Content creation for TV, radio, print, and digital media" as an area of expected work. What are OCM's expectations regarding content creation for out-of-home media?	OCM would like to include out-of-home and OTT media as well. Given the breadth of populations that the media campaigns are intended to cover, all avenues for content creation will be explored. Please detail which areas your agency may specialize in or recommend to reach targeted populations.
38	In 3. Content of Response, the RFI asks if the vendor "is agreeable to providing samples of previous work campaigns." If a vendor is agreeable, where and how should they provide work samples? Do you have preferred formats for receiving TV, radio, print, and digital media samples? Can we create an online portal for this RFI and submit our work samples via a link to that portal?	Recommend submission through the OGS contact provided on the RFI. Alternatively a link to an online portal is acceptable.
39	Is a contract number required, or does it offer preference to a vendor?	No, a NYS contract number is not required to respond to this RFI.
40	Are you going to provide SMEs for each campaign with whom to work?	Yes.
41	Are you going to allow multiple awardees when the decision is made?	Preference will be given to an agency that can either accomplish all of these tasks or subcontract to other partners when necessary.
42	If you do not have a NYS Contract Number (PSXXXXX), will you be invited to submit a proposal?	A NYS contract number is not required to respond to this RFI and we do not have information on future proposals at this time.
43	What is the public education campaign timeline?	The exact date of the public education campaign launch is unknown at this time and will depend on when the RFP is released and the time it takes to develop the campaign.
44	What is the budget for the public education campaign, as well as the media buy budget?	There is no budgetary information at this time.
45	Is there any existing data (market research, surveying, etc.) that will be provided to the chosen vendor?	OCM will provide public health data and baseline metrics to help measure the success or impact of the campaign.
46	Should the Proposed Work Plan assume the four campaigns are intended to run in parallel, or sequentially?	Campaigns will be aired sequentially. If your agency specializes in content creation for one population more so than another, please include that information as well.
47	Is there a desired launch date and/or duration for the four campaigns?	The exact date of the public education campaign launch is unknown at this time and will depend on when the RFP is released and the time it takes to develop the campaign.



## **Request for Information (RFI) #2478 New York State Public Education Campaigns for Cannabis Use and Prevention**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1. GENERAL INFORMATION AND PURPOSE**

The New York State (NYS) Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) is requesting information from qualified vendors with proven expertise in developing and implementing large-scale public education campaigns to assist the OCM in creating and implementing a statewide campaign to educate New York residents about safe, legal, and responsible use of cannabis, and to prevent cannabis use in persons who are under the age of 21 years old.

Public education is a priority for New York State as cannabis policies in the State change. The OCM is interested in approaches that can be used to maximize impact and minimize costs when implementing EACH of the following campaigns:

1. A campaign educating the public about what is legal under the Marijuana Regulation and Taxation Act (MRTA);
2. A campaign targeting at-risk youth and trusted adults with messages about cannabis prevention and problem use;
3. A campaign targeting pregnant and breastfeeding individuals with messages about potential harms of cannabis use to parents and babies;
4. A campaign focused on adult cannabis consumers with messages about why to purchase legal cannabis (vs. from the illicit market) and focusing on harm reduction and safe use messages.

Information about the benefits and tradeoffs of linking certain campaigns through similar branding or approaches versus having separately branded campaigns is also requested.

Vendors interested in participating in any possible future opportunities are encouraged to respond to this RFI.

#### **1.2. PROJECT BACKGROUND/MISSION**

OCM is looking for approaches and best practices that should be considered when developing and implementing each of the campaigns listed in section 1.1. The following work is expected:

- Development of messaging through data collection and focus groups with the target population(s)
- Message testing with groups from the target population(s)
- Content creation for TV, radio, print, and digital media
- Content and concept testing of developed materials
- Placement of media across all New York media markets, including New York City
- Development of materials and pull through approaches for relevant clinical, local, and community-based promotion of campaign messages
- Earned media related to campaigns to extend reach
- Campaign revisions and message evolution as marketplace develops

#### **1.3. CURRENT ENVIRONMENT**

OCM is a newly formed independent office within the Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control that is regulating the adult-use cannabis or “recreational marijuana” marketplace (in addition to the medical and hemp marketplaces) in New York State. On March 31, 2021, New York State legalized adult use and sale of cannabis. In order for the

OCM to issue adult-use cannabis licenses and for retail sales to begin, several foundational tasks need to be completed including the appointment of the Cannabis Control Board, the issuance and adoption of regulations, the hiring and training of staff at the OCM and the development of the infrastructure necessary to accept applications. It is anticipated these actions will take at least 12 to 18 months to complete. Launching a public education campaign in advance of a marketplace opening is important to protecting public health and safety and is a priority for the State.

## **2. DESIRED KNOWLEDGE**

OCM seeks to gain information about novel approaches and specific qualifications that may be needed to develop and implement each the above campaigns, as well as any relevant considerations for the timeline and the costs (note – this is not a Request for Proposal – please do not submit specific costs, but ranges and cost considerations as well as the timeline it would take to implement is desired). Insights about the pros and cons between wrapping all campaigns into one or two primary brands versus having specifically branded campaigns is also requested. Examples of similar or relevant work that could inform New York State’s public education efforts related to cannabis are requested as well.

Please see below for a list of questions that OCM seeks information on:

1. What are effective yet cost efficient ways to conduct formative work with the targeted campaign populations?
2. What are approaches that can be used to ensure that hard-to-reach or at-risk populations are included in formative work for the campaign(s)?
3. What approaches can be used to test messages with a sufficiently broad range of individuals within the targeted population(s) (e.g., in terms of geographic location, age, race/ethnicity) while still reaching consensus around an impactful message?
4. What approaches can be used to shorten the timeframe needed to conduct formative work and message development and testing work with the target population(s)?
5. What approaches can be used in creating content to maximize effects on social and digital media?
6. What are cost-effective approaches to reach the targeted population(s) across the state through TV placement of content, given that New York has the most expensive media market in the United States?
7. What approaches can be used in terms of content placement to reach hard-to-reach populations for each of the aforementioned campaigns?
8. What resources and materials should be created for local, community, and clinician groups to be able to leverage and promote campaign messages?
9. What novel approaches can be used to drive earned media around the aforementioned campaigns?
10. How can outside evaluation data be utilized to quickly evolve campaign messages to maximize impacts on the desired behavior(s).
11. What are the pros and cons of considering one umbrella brand or campaign underneath which all of the aforementioned campaigns occur, versus creating a number of different brands and distinct campaigns?
12. Describe how market research and analysis will be utilized to provide information about specific target audiences and the subsequent needs to drive behavior change, including market segmentation, most effective media type and placement, how to best position messages relative to other marketing and advertising efforts, and the relative merit of selected strategies and messages?
13. Broadly – what are cost-effective approaches to consider in developing and implementing any or all of the aforementioned campaigns?
14. Broadly – what approaches could be considered to shorten the timeframe needed to develop and implement any or all of the aforementioned campaigns?
15. How to effectively target campaigns to minorities and women at a local level and in specific communities or neighborhoods?
16. How best to ensure a diversity of the population identifies within the targeted campaigns? With communications inclusive of, but not limited to, economic, cultural identity, level of education, age, race, gender identity, and nationality.
17. What types and levels of experience are needed from vendors that specialize in diversity marketing?
18. How is effective diversity marketing measured?

### 3. CONTENT OF RESPONSE

OGS requests that vendors include the following information in their written responses:

- Company Background – Provide general background information regarding your company, including a summary of previous experience in similar types of projects.
- Contract Information – Include your NYS Contract Number (PSXXXXX), if applicable. Indicate what products and services may be available under the contract as well as what products and services may not be available under the contract.
- Product Background – Provide information regarding products and/or technology that you envision could be implemented for this scope, including any applicable names, manufacturers, specifications and relevant information, such as products used in similar situations.
- Proposed Work Plan – Provide a general approach to accomplishing this public education campaign, including, technology expectations, milestones and a project plan and/or timeline.
- Issues and Concerns – Provide information regarding any other potential issues or concerns that should be considered. Responses may include strength and weakness comparisons of known potential solutions from the vendor's point of view.
- Indicate if the vendor is agreeable to providing samples of previous work/campaigns.
- Provide the approximate cost of a service of similar scope and size and the pricing mechanism utilized.
- Additional Information – Provide any additional information and/or any other parameters that should be considered or required for bidders to respond to a formal solicitation.

Please respond to the information above and provide the name of your company, its location, a contact person, phone number, and email address when replying to this RFI. A response does not bind or obligate the vendor to any agreement of provision or procurement of services referenced.

Since this RFI is designed as a tool to collect information and shall not result in a procurement contract, it does not fall under the requirements of State Finance Law §§139-j and 139-k (the Procurement Lobbying Law) and there is no restricted period. We ask that you direct your questions and responses in writing to the OGS point of contact listed below. Questions should be submitted by June 3, 2021. All questions and responses will be posted via Addendum to the OGS Bid Calendar website found at <https://ogs.ny.gov/procurement/bid-opportunities>.

Provide responses via email to the contacts listed below by June 17, 2021:

#### Primary Contact

Dan Schenkman, Contract Management Specialist 1  
Office of General Services, Financial Administration Agency Procurement Office  
32<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Corning Tower, ESP, Albany, NY 12242  
(518) 474-4642 [daniel.schenkman@ogs.ny.gov](mailto:daniel.schenkman@ogs.ny.gov)

#### Secondary Contact

Paige Corning, Contract Management Specialist 2  
Office of General Services, Financial Administration Agency Procurement Office  
32<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Corning Tower, ESP, Albany, NY 12242  
(518) 474-8209 [paige.corning@ogs.ny.gov](mailto:paige.corning@ogs.ny.gov)