



**To:** RFP Responders  
**From:** Tarves R. Lord  
**Date:** 1/6/2021  
**Subject:** NYCERS Response to Questions for RFP #01132021-DEICon

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1. Is there any spend goal on MWBE certified firms for this RFP? The NYS Contractor seems to suggest that there isn't any and the RFP document doesn't seem to suggest there is a spend target.
  - a. There is no MWBE spend target for this solicitation; however, MWBE vendors are strongly encouraged to submit proposals.
2. What is the estimated budget not to exceed amount, for the period of performance?
  - a. The proposed price must be adequate to accomplish the entire project scope and meet all RFP terms and requirements. Respondents will not be entitled to additional monies, special considerations or contract changes as a result of any form of underestimating or underpricing of any portion of the project scope or other costs necessary to meet all RFP terms and requirements. NYCERS reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reduce any Respondent's evaluation score due to any cost proposal concerns.
3. What is the expected timeframe for the completion of the project?
  - a. We anticipate completion of the project no later than 6 months after initial engagement.
4. Are all employees available to participate in interviews, surveys and group discussions?
  - a. Yes
5. Is the NYCERS Board willing and able to participate in interviews and surveys?
  - a. We anticipate that they will be.
6. If yes, will there be a board member assigned to this project?
  - a. NYCERS can request a board liaison for the project if that is part of the scope of the vendor's proposal.
7. Will there be IT support for email surveys, tele conference, etc?
  - a. No

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## NEW YORK CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

8. The work will be done remotely until further notice?
  - a. Yes.
9. The MWBE/MBE goals are not stated, please clarify.
  - a. There are no MWBE/MBE goals required for this RFP; however, MWBE vendors are strongly encouraged to submit proposals.
10. "Why now: The RFP outlines what DEI means to NYCERS, why NYCERS values DEI and how the success of the organization is dependent upon it. Can NYCERS elaborate on why Leadership is embarking on the current assessment and roadmap development now (e.g., recent world events, identified inequities within NYCERS, etc.)?"
  - a. As a client-centered organization dedicated to the highest quality service delivery, NYCERS has always had a deep commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. DEI is a central element of NYCERS' Mission and Values Statement: we embrace diversity and recognize that our differences strengthen us. Recent events have made clear that DEI must be embedded in every aspect of organizational culture and operations. As we move forward with NYCERS' Strategic Goals and Objectives, we intend to create a more transparent, inclusive, trust-based culture of belonging that empowers all staff make a greater impact for our clients.
11. NYCERS DEI sponsorship and project ownership: The RFP references the ED and Leadership team as sponsors for this assessment and future roadmap/ DEI program. Is there an existing Head of DEI/ Chief Diversity Officer and/or supporting DEI team to partner with and drive the future roadmap/ program? If not, is there a plan to hire for such a role before the start of or during this engagement?
  - a. NYCERS does not have a Chief Diversity Officer. There is no plan to hire for such a role before or during this engagement. NYCERS plans to use their four EEO officers in the capacity of a DEI team for this engagement.
12. Who will serve as NYCERS project lead for this engagement?
  - a. Maureen Brooks, Deputy Director of Human Resources
13. What data does NYCERS currently collect that is or could be used to drive toward a data-driven DEI culture?
  - a. The Organizational Development and Training division has administered annual employee engagement surveys. The Human Resources Division collects diversity data on hiring and separations. In addition, the Organizational Development and Training division has administered a survey shortly after going remote and another survey to learn how well we are living our values.
14. Does NYCERS currently collect or have any measures or KPI's in place to monitor progress and drive towards accountability?
  - a. Not for DEI.
15. Existing surveys: Is there an existing annual employee engagement survey, pulse surveys, etc.? Has NYCERS conducted employee experience focus groups in the past? If so, what

has worked well in the past in administering surveys or focus groups? What hasn't worked well?

- a. The Organizational Development and Training division has administered annual employee engagement surveys. What has worked well in the past is a) short answer questions; and b) encouragement and reassurance from supervisors and senior leadership that the surveys are anonymous and the responses are valued. The City of New York has conducted client surveys the last couple of years.
16. If there is existing employee survey data, can NYCERS provide access to summary outputs and/or any insight on existing employee experience pain points -- particularly those related to inclusivity, diversity and/or equity?
- a. There is minimal data from employee engagement surveys available. The only survey data relevant is the answer to the question how well do we do in living this value: "we embrace diversity and recognize that our differences strengthen us"?
17. Communications to date: What, if any, has NYCERS communicated to its employees around this future DEI engagement and/or future DEI actions?
- a. Agency Executive Leadership, which consists of division directors and deputy directors, have been informed that this engagement is forthcoming. Non-managerial staff have not yet been informed. We are looking for consultant expertise to help plan these communications.
18. If the vendor has administered previous surveys have they used a vendor to do so and would it be preferable to use the same technology used in the past or can we use other survey tools?
- a. NYCERS has not used a vendor to administer any internal surveys. Proposers are welcome to use other survey tools.
19. What work model is NYCERS adhering to currently -- are employees working from home, in offices or using a hybrid model? What expectations would there be for vendors to be onsite with the staff?
- a. Consultants would work primarily remotely until further notice. However, Respondents are expected to have the capacity to provide both remote and in-person avenues for completing the proposed project.
20. How is the organization structured? Is it organized by function / location / business unit etc.? How many people on average are there in teams / functions?
- a. NYCERS consists of nearly 500 employees deployed across approximately 20 divisions, organized by function.
21. Key dates: What is the desired timeframe in which NYCERS would like to complete the survey/ assessment and have a roadmap ready for socialization?
- a. We anticipate completion of the project no later than 6 months after initial engagement.

22. Section III Project Team: Will there also be resources from NYCERS dedicated as part of the project team. If so, to what extent? Will it be minimal?
- a. The project coordinator and one administrative assistant will be available for coordination and scheduling purposes, on an ad hoc basis. There is no full-time NYCERS resource dedicated to this project.
23. Section III Project Team: This section asks for composition of vendor project team and vendor project team resumes. However, the title of the RFP implies one single DEI consultant. Please confirm NYCERS welcomes vendors to propose the project team size appropriate to successfully execute the project scope outlined in the RFP -- even if this is more than one consultant.
- a. Yes, NYCERS welcomes vendors who propose a project team. The response is not limited to sole consultants.
24. Section IV References: RFP asks for 3 customer references with similar scope, but Attachment C calls out 5 customer references. Please confirm if 3 or 5 references are required.
- a. NYCERS requires 3 customer references in accordance with the RFP Scope.
25. Minimum Proposer Qualifications: RFP outlines the Proposer must have a minimum of 10 years DEI experience. Please confirm if this requirement is specific to the vendor organization OR specific to years of DEI experience for the proposed project team/ individual.
- a. This requirement is specific to the project team lead or individual consultant.
26. Is there a duration for which the withholding of payments is applicable? Is it post the completion of the Agreement?
- a. This ~~issue~~ would be addressed during contract negotiations.
27. Are Powerpoint files that are saved and submitted as PDF acceptable?
- a. A narrative report in addition to any Powerpoint slide deck would be required. All submitted documents must be in PDF or Word format.
28. Will there be any opportunity to negotiate on any terms and conditions as listed?
- a. There will be a contract negotiation period prior to finalization of any agreement.
29. We would like to learn more about your agency via phone and if you are willing to work with a consultant firm outside of NYC.
- a. NYCERS is unable to contact vendors directly to speak about the agency. Information about NYCERS is available on the website, [www.nycers.org](http://www.nycers.org). The RFP does not limit to Respondents to only those located in New York. Please note that the RFP requires that Respondents shall build in travel time, travel costs, and any other appropriate expenses within its Cost Proposal.