REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Strategic Plan Consultant
August 5, 2022
BACKGROUND

The Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library is a 21st-century, landmark library; recently named the Library Journal’s 2016 Library of the Year in the U.S. and Canada. The Library features the Alice C. Sabatini Gallery, the Millennium Café, Chandler Booktique (used bookstore), free meeting rooms, computer training and Internet access. Located in the heart of Shawnee County, the Library has a collection of more than 450,000 items and serves nearly 110,000 registered borrowers. About 2,000 people walk through the doors daily. Bookmobiles make about 25 stops six days a week traveling across the county and the Library provides services to 40 senior living facilities and 130 homebound individuals. The Digital Branch Library, www.tscpl.org, serves customers’ needs 24/7.

In 2016 the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library finalized a series of Community Impact Goals that have been the basis for the Library’s strategies and initiatives over the past few years. These Community Impact Goals were developed as a result of an extensive community planning process that included a community survey, community meetings, staff meetings, and a board retreat. Prior to this, the Library’s last formal strategic plan was created in 2005.

The Community Impact Goals have led to many of the library’s major initiatives over the past few years. Some examples include:

- The Learn and Play Bus, which is focused on early childhood literacy
- The TSCPL @ School program, which gets a library card to every Shawnee County public school student
- Several updates of the Library building, including a remodeled Gallery, café, and soon to open Level 2 Tech Center
- Helping fully fund and sustain participation in the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, so that every child in Shawnee County can receive a free book in the mail once a month from birth to age 5.
In October 2021, Marie Pyko became the new Library CEO following the retirement of Gina Millsap, who had been CEO for 15 years. With the change in leadership and all the changes the last few years have brought, it is time to create a new strategic plan to continue to push the library forward and respond to and anticipate the changing needs of our community to help the library make the greatest impact possible.

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library seeks a consultant who will assist our organization in creating a strategic plan. We are committed to undertaking a strategic process that will actively engage our organization, board, and community in thinking about the future. The Library would like to begin the strategic planning process in early 2023 with the entire planning process completed within six months.

B. PROPOSED PROJECT SCOPE

The Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library is seeking an experienced professional consultant to perform the following:

1. Facilitate the strategic planning process using a methodology effective for public libraries.
2. Gather data through community research that focuses on library users, non-users, and stakeholders, including Board and staff, to identify Library needs/wants.
3. Community engagement is a key component of this planning process. This should be a collective process involving all the various community stakeholders, to develop a sense of the community vision and shared purpose for the Library’s future including both current users and non-users.
4. Implementation of community meetings, stakeholder interviews, focus groups and other standard needs assessment methodologies.
5. Implementation of a formal community survey.
6. Facilitate planning meetings and input sessions (public, Board, and staff sessions).
7. Review the current values, goals, mission, and vision statements and facilitate revisions if needed.
8. Identify and communicate service priorities, goals, objectives, and activities in a visionary yet actionable plan.
9. All raw and summary data is to be delivered to the Topeka & Shawnee County Library at the conclusion of the planning process.
10. The budget for this project is somewhat flexible, but for all aspects of the project the Library is looking to spend in the range of $40,000 - $50,000.

C. SUBMISSION

Responses must be received via email before 3:00 PM, CST, September 2, 2022. Submissions should be emailed to Chief of Staff Thad Hartman at thartman@tscpl.org. Each applicant should provide the following to be considered for this project:

1. A cover letter providing a brief description of the firm or individual name, address of consultant, telephone number, and email of principal contact person.
2. Executive summary of the highlights of the proposal, not to exceed one page in length, conveying the consultant’s understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of the project.
3. A list of key personnel who would be involved in the process and their experience/expertise. If you plan to contract with a third-party vendor to conduct the community research component, please identify the firm you plan to use.
4. A summary of the consulting firm’s qualifications and relevant experience.
5. A work plan that includes a description of the methodology, tasks, timeline, and estimated total amount of time that would be spent on the project. This plan should include an optimal mix of in-person and online meetings.
6. Exclusions or exceptions. Note any parts of the proposal that are beyond the expertise of the consultant or would be better handled by Library staff.
7. A schedule of costs that includes consulting, supplies, number of onsite visits, cost per trip, and other costs associated with the planning process. Costs for data gathering and analysis (community research component) must be listed separately.
8. References and contact information for three (3) organizations for which the facilitator has provided strategic planning services. Public library references would be preferred.
9. An example of two (2) strategic plans that were created in which the facilitator provided strategic planning services.

D. RFQ STANDARDS AND SELECTION CRITERIA

A committee will evaluate the proposals and may select as many as five consultants or consulting groups for interviews.

The committee will recommend the response it finds is most advantageous. The committee reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses and to waive any formalities or deviations which best serve TSCPL’s interests. The committee is not bound to accept the lowest priced response. Subsequent to the Response Submission deadline, TSCPL reserves the right to negotiate terms and conditions with respondents, and the right to negotiate modifications to a single response without obligation to negotiate similar modifications with others.

TSCPL will review responses submitted by the deadline. Thereafter the committee anticipates preparing a short list of finalists, conducting interviews of the finalists, selecting a consultant and negotiating a detailed contract.

Consultant selection will be based on qualifications and demonstrated competence; the criteria noted herein help the library evaluate the responses to this RFQ.
1. Responsiveness of the written proposal to the purpose and scope of the project.
2. Demonstrated knowledge, skills, and experience in conducting strategic planning projects for similar public libraries.
3. Methodology and timeline for carrying out tasks in the scope of work.
4. Cost to complete the process.
5. Ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget.
6. Positive experience and success in strategic and library planning; satisfactory performance record (references).

E. AWARD

At the conclusion of its review the committee will report its work and recommendation the Library Board of Trustees for its consideration and approval.

F. TENTATIVE SELECTION TIMELINE AND PROCEDURES

- RFQ issued and posted on library website August 5, 2022
- All questions must be received no later than August 26, 2022
- Responses must be received via email before 3:00 PM, CST, September 2, 2022
- Rating and preliminary selection September 9, 2022
- Interviews with selected consultants begin September 16, 2022
- Consulting firm selected on or before October 7, 2022
- Award of contract October 20, 2022
- Contracted services commence January 2, 2023
The Library will evaluate all responses. Other than the response due date noted above the other aspects of the timeline are estimates.

**G. SELECTION**

This RFQ does not commit the Library to contract with any respondent. TSCPL will issue a letter of intent when a selection is made. A final award is contingent upon the successful negotiation of a contract that TSCPL determines is reasonable and fair.

**H. RESPONSE SUBMISSION PROCEDURES**

1. Responses must be received via email before 3:00 PM, CST, September 2, 2022. Submissions should be emailed to Chief of Staff Thad Hartman at thartman@tscpl.org.
2. The Library will not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation and production of a response or any work performed prior to the execution of a contract for architectural services.
3. All responses and supporting materials become property of the Library upon submission.
4. Upon the Library’s request, a respondent may be asked to submit additional information to supplement their response.
5. All questions regarding this RFQ must be directed to Thad Hartman, 1515 SW 10th Ave, Topeka, KS 66604, Phone (785) 580-4481, email thartman@tscpl.org.
6. Those interested in submitting a response to the RFQ are responsible to make sure they have any and all addenda to the RFQ issued by the Library, and that they consider any addenda in their response. In the event that it is necessary to revise any part of the RFQ, timely
addenda will be posted on the Library’s Request for Proposals web page (https://tscpl.org/about/request-for-proposals) and sent via e-mail to those consultants that have requested in writing to be sent a copy of the any Addenda.

7. The Library reserves the right to:
   a. Waive any informalities or irregularities and reject any or all responses received as a result of this RFQ.
   b. Following initial selection, negotiate the scope of services, contract terms and compensation for Architectural Services to be provided.
   c. Conduct investigations required to determine the respondent’s performance record and ability to perform the work specified as part of the RFQ.
   d. Modify any dates or times in the RFQ other than the Response Submission deadline of September 5, 2022, at 3:00 p.m.
   e. Supplement, amend, or otherwise modify the RFQ or cancel this request with or without the substitution of another RFQ.
   f. Disqualify any respondent who fails to provide information or data requested herein, who provides inaccurate or misleading information or data, who has any real or apparent conflict of interest, or on the basis of past performance with the Library.