



ANDREW J. GINTHER, MAYOR

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY
AND INCLUSION

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

SOLICITATION NUMBER: RFQ029239

DATE ISSUED: 11-14-2024

The City of Columbus, Office of Diversity and Inclusion requests information regarding methodologies and data approaches for a:

Disparity Study Update

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose – Request for Information (RFI) Only

The City of Columbus (City), Office of Diversity and Inclusion (ODI), seeks information from vendors regarding potential options, approaches, and methodologies for updating the City of Columbus’ previous disparity study. The City will review proposed options for feasibility, and then determine the next steps that are in the best interest of the City.

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes – it does not constitute a Request for Proposal (RFP) or a promise to issue an RFP in the future. Additional information regarding submissions for this RFI is outlined in the Response Guidance (see section 4).

1.2 City of Columbus

Columbus is home to 20 Fortune 1000 companies, Ohio’s state capital and largest city, and the 14th largest city in the U.S. Columbus has a population of over 900,000 within the greater Columbus metro region of 2.5 million. The City manages a large array of services and assets on a \$1.2 billion operating budget and a \$1.7 billion capital budget. With over 100 spoken languages and a diverse population where nearly 30% of residents identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian, or multi-racial, Columbus thrives as a vibrant and inclusive community that reflects a broad spectrum of cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds.

The City operates and is governed by its charter and is subject to the general laws of Ohio that apply to all municipalities. The Columbus City Charter provides for a mayor-council form of government. The Mayor is the chief executive officer and City Council is the legislative body. Other elected officials include the City Auditor, City Attorney, Municipal Court Clerk, and Municipal Court Judges.

Additional information about the City of Columbus is available at <https://www.columbus.gov/>.

1.3 Office of Diversity and Inclusion

The Mayor’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in collaboration with city departments and community partners. ODI's initiatives, including Equity, Supplier Diversity, and Workforce Diversity, aim to reduce disparities, promote fair procurement practices, and support a diverse workforce reflective of the Columbus community.

Additional information about ODI is available at <https://www.columbus.gov/diversity>.

2 STUDY COMPONENTS & FEATURES

2.1 Key Objectives

The City’s high-level considerations for this RFI are:

- 2.1.1. Assessing the utilization of minority- and women-owned businesses in City contracts for construction, goods and services, and professional services and reviewing the representation of these businesses in the City’s procurement process and examine any disparities that exist.

2.1.2. Best practices, methodological considerations, and unique opportunities related to updating the previous study.

2.1.3. Guidance on the scope, data collection requirements, and analyses necessary for completing an update to the study.

2.2 Core Priorities

The City has a priority and legal requirement to provide an update to the 2019 disparity study. This update aims to assess the participation of minority- and women-owned businesses on City contracts, spanning areas such as construction, goods and services, and professional services, in compliance with the legal framework established by *City of Richmond v. J. A. Croson Co.*

2.2.1. Data

2.2.1.1. What key data sources are recommended for a comprehensive update of our disparity study?

2.2.1.2. How could the analysis be expanded beyond certified lists to include all available business data?

2.2.1.3. What technologies or advanced methods are used to enhance data analysis in disparity studies?

2.2.1.4. What steps are taken to ensure data accuracy and reliability throughout the study?

2.2.1.5. How are data gaps or limitations in business and demographic data addressed?

2.2.2. Methodology and Best Practices

2.2.2.1. What primary methodologies are used to conduct disparity studies, and how are these methods adapted to address the unique needs of different municipalities, industries, or demographic compositions?

2.2.2.2. How is the data collection process structured to ensure comprehensive inclusion of minority- and women-owned business enterprises across diverse sectors and business sizes?

2.2.2.3. What specific steps are taken to ensure that applicable legal standards are met and can withstand scrutiny in audits, legal challenges, or public review?

2.2.2.4. What methods are used to integrate community engagement and gather stakeholder feedback throughout the study? How is stakeholder engagement structured to incorporate diverse perspectives while maintaining objective analysis?

2.2.2.5. What interim reports, updates, or preliminary findings are provided during the study process, and what final deliverables are expected at the study's conclusion?

2.2.2.6. How is it ensured that the final report offers actionable recommendations that are adaptable to future demographic shifts and evolving market conditions?

2.2.2.7. What post-study support is available to assist with implementing recommendations or conducting follow-up assessments?

3 VENDOR CAPABILITIES & FEATURES

3.1 Experience and Expertise

The City seeks responses from vendors with proven expertise in conducting disparity studies, with a track record of delivering successful, high-quality studies for municipalities of our size and complexity.

- 3.1.1. How many disparity studies have you completed in the last five years?
- 3.1.2. What is your experience with conducting disparity studies in municipalities with populations similar in size and diversity to Columbus, Ohio?
- 3.1.3. What specific expertise should the team bring in analyzing MWBE data across diverse industries and sectors?
- 3.1.4. What are the qualifications and relevant experience of the key personnel assigned to this project?

4 RESPONSE GUIDANCE

Respondents are invited to submit responses to this RFI, in the format that best showcases their capabilities and understanding of the City’s needs. We encourage respondents to provide data approaches and methodologies, case studies, reference materials, and budgetary considerations.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion will review proposed solutions for fit and feasibility, and then determine the next steps that are in the best interest of the City. This RFI is not a solicitation for proposals but rather an opportunity for us to gather insights and explore options for a potential update to the study.

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is not at this time seeking proposals and will not accept unsolicited proposals. Respondents are advised that the Office of Diversity and Inclusion will not pay for any information or administrative costs incurred in response to this RFI; all costs associated with responding to this RFI will be solely at the interested party’s expense. Not responding to this RFI does not preclude participation in any future RFP, if any is issued. If a solicitation is released, it will be found on the City procurement portal at <https://columbus.bonfirehub.com/opportunities>. It is the responsibility of the potential offerors to monitor these sites for additional information pertaining to this requirement.

Key dates of this RFI are as follows:

Event	Date
Firm Dates	
RFI Issued:	11-14-2024 @ 12:00 PM EST
RFI Due (at portal below):	12-12-2024 @ 4:00 PM EST
City Vendor Services Portal:	https://columbusvendorservices.powerappsportals.com/OpenRFQs/

There are references in this RFI to event dates. Unless it is clearly provided to the contrary in this RFI, any such reference means the date and time that the RFI is due, not just the date, as recorded by the City procurement portal in Columbus, Ohio local time, which is in the Eastern U.S. Time Zone.

4.1 Contact and Communication

For strictly administrative issues, the primary point of contact for the City for this RFI is:

Dr. Kenyona Walker
Assistant Chief Diversity Officer
DisparityStudyRFx@columbus.gov

4.2 RFI Submittal

Submit responses per instructions to the City Vendor Services portal (<https://columbusvendorservices.powerappsportals.com/OpenRFQs/>). All submitted information, including all workbooks, forms, brochures, slide decks, and attachments must be submitted via the portal no later than the “RFI Due” date (see table above in section 4).

The City will review all responses carefully and may reach out to select vendors for further discussions and clarifications of proposed options. Please note that responding to this RFI does not guarantee any future engagement or contract award.

This RFI is for informal purposes only and does not constitute a formal request for proposal.

4.3 Confidentiality

All confidential information within RFI submissions must be clearly marked as confidential at a detailed level. Confidential markings must be reasonable, limited, and not encompassing. The City will protect confidential content from disclosure as is permissible by law. In the event the City is compelled to disclose confidential information it will notify the offeror in advance such that the offeror has opportunity to seek a stay or court order to preclude release. In general, all proposals are a matter of public record at the conclusion of the selection process pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43, the Public Records Act.

4.4 Relevant Resources

The following resources are provided for additional context and may be useful in preparing your response:

[2019 Disparity Study Executive Summary](#)

[Title 39: City of Columbus Diversity and Inclusion Code](#)

[City of Columbus Auditor’s Transparency Portal](#)