



NECC23-MKT01 Digital Advertising Request for Proposal (RFP) July 10, 2023

Northern Essex Community College (NECC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals for Digital Advertising Services as outlined below. NECC is seeking a marketing agency to collaborate in planning and placing digital advertising campaigns. Assist in developing strategy and planning for enrollment campaigns (fall, winter, spring, and summer), as well as event specific marketing campaigns throughout the year. Campaigns should encompass a mix of digital advertising platforms to include social media, remarketing, list targeted, video, paid search and display, and geofencing. All media buys will be required to adhere to our specific geographic service territory. The ideal agency will have a strong understanding of the community college mission, its target audiences, and the community college enrollment process and timelines.

Bid Documents will be available beginning July 10, 2023 on www.necc.mass.edu/bids

Sealed proposals will be received until **July 24, 2023 until 9:00am** at which time all proposals will be **opened, read and recorded.**

Proposals should be clearly marked **NECC23-MKT01 – Digital Advertising Services** submitted in a sealed envelope and received at:

**Northern Essex Community College
Procurement Department, B216
100 Elliott St.
Haverhill, MA 01830**

This is a sealed RFP and may NOT be submitted electronically. The College will not be held responsible if any proposal is not so marked and is unintentionally opened as a result. Postmarks will NOT be considered. Proposals received after this date and time will not be considered. It is the Bidder's responsibility to ensure this condition is met. Proposals delivered to the College mailroom or receiving dock are NOT acceptable.

All questions must be forwarded via email to procurement@necc.mass.edu. Questions may not be submitted by mail, fax or telephone.

All addenda and responses to questions will be posted on www.necc.mass.edu/bids. They will not be mailed, faxed or emailed.

If NECC is closed due to uncontrolled events such as fire, snow, ice, wind, building evacuation or other foreseen circumstances the bid conference will be held at 12:00pm on the next business day. Bid responses will be accepted until 10:00am on the next normal business day.

Responses not in compliance with bid requirements will be deemed non-responsive.

All times listed are understood to be Eastern Standard/Daylight Savings (US) unless otherwise noted.

All bid materials must be signed in ink. Facsimile signatures are unacceptable.

Proposals must be signed by an authorized agent of the company. Late proposals will not be considered.

Prices quoted must be available for acceptance for at least ninety (90) days after the bid closing date.

NECC reserves the right to accept the proposal deemed best for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and NECC. The Contract will be awarded to the Vendor who offers the best combination of price, capability and service options as determined by NECC. NECC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, wholly or in part.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Bids Available	July 10, 2023
Deadline for Written Bidders Questions	July 17, 2023 9:00am
Responses posted by	July 18, 2023 4:00pm
Bids Due	July 24, 2023, 9:00am
Contract Award	July 28, 2023
Contract Start Date	August 1, 2023
Contract End Date	July 31, 2024
Renewal Options	Optional - Two (2), One (1) year renewals

The date listed for Contract Award is an estimate and supplied only as a courtesy to Bidders.

CONTRACT TERMINATION: The successful Bidder will be required to enter into a Contract containing the following provisions:

NECC reserves the right to terminate this Contract with or without cause or if the successful Bidder fails to comply with the provisions of the Contract. The College reserves the right to terminate any and all parts of this Contract specification due to lack of or reduction in financial appropriations that fund this Contract.

RETURN OF PROPOSALS: NECC shall be under no obligation to return any proposals or materials submitted by a Vendor in response to this RFP.

CANCELLATION OF RFP: NECC retains the right to cancel this RFP or any portion thereof at any time prior to the execution and approval of a Contract, in which event all proposals received in response to this RFP or the relevant portion thereof will be rejected. The College reserves the right not to award a Contract if, at the sole discretion of the College, it is in the best interests of NECC to re-bid or determine an alternate means to provide these services at the College campuses. Should this RFP be cancelled, all expenses related to the preparation of responses to this RFP remain the responsibility of the Vendor.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONTRACT: NECC reserves the right to amend the Contract arising from this RFP and in particular, to add or remove services at a mutually agreed upon cost.

NECC OVERVIEW

Northern Essex Community College offers nearly 60 high-quality, affordable degree and certificate programs as well as hundreds of noncredit courses designed for personal enrichment and career growth. More than 4,000 students are enrolled in credit associate degree and certificate programs on the Haverhill and Lawrence campuses; and another 6,700 take noncredit workforce development and community education classes.

With campuses in Haverhill and Lawrence, NECC is the first federally designated Hispanic Serving Institution in New England, is an education leader for the Merrimack Valley. For more information, visit the website at www.necc.mass.edu.

INSTITUTIONAL SITUATIONAL SNAPSHOT

NECC offers primarily two-year associate degrees and one-year certificates, as well as non-credit class offerings. Most of our students attend part-time and our median average age is 22 (with the majority of students being of “traditional” college age). We skew more female than male (roughly 60% to 40%), and we have a significant Latino presence (approximately 40%). All of our students either commute to one of our campus locations (in Haverhill and Lawrence), or they take classes online (we have no residential housing). Well over 95% of our student population comes from within a 10 to 20 minute commute of our Haverhill and Lawrence campuses. All of the community colleges in Massachusetts (and the majority of them from all across the country) have been experiencing enrollment declines over the last few years (after many years of sustained growth). This is mainly due to the economy -- community colleges historically experience enrollment growth when the economy is bad and enrollment decline when the economy is doing well (low unemployment, fewer career enhancers, students more likely to be willing to pay more for their education, etc.). Our biggest enrollment-focused challenges right now are retaining the students who come here, attracting new prospects and converting the prospects who apply.

AGENCY SELECTION

NECC will select an agency based on a comprehensive evaluation of each vendor’s recommendations on how NECC can best achieve the goals defined below. We will also be evaluating each agency’s recommendations that demonstrate both creativity, ingenuity and a demonstrated track record of success.

PROJECT SCOPE

NECC is seeking a marketing agency to collaborate in planning and placing digital advertising campaigns.

Assist in developing strategy and planning for enrollment campaigns (fall, winter, spring, and summer), as well as event specific marketing campaigns throughout the year.

Campaigns should encompass a mix of digital advertising platforms to include social media, remarketing, list targeted, video, paid search and display, and geofencing.

All media buys will be required to adhere to our specific geographic service territory as listed on Exhibit A.

The ideal agency will have a strong understanding of the community college mission, its target audiences, and the community college enrollment process and timelines.

PROJECT GOALS & OBJECTIVE

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To utilize all viable and appropriate online marketing channels and methods of delivery to generate quality website traffic, leads/conversions, and social media engagement from within our institution's specified service territory.

CAMPAIGN MANAGEMENT

The agency will be required to complete all aspects of campaign set-up and management as well as make recommendations for the best methods and digital marketing channels for reaching the various target audiences. **Required:** Campaigns must be incorporated into NECC's existing Google Analytics, Adwords, and Facebook accounts for tracking purposes.

CREATIVE

The agency or consultant should provide details of their capabilities (with typical pricing) for providing creative assets for the campaigns including banner ads, copywriting and landing pages. NECC has internal resources for completing this requirement but may want to consider outsourcing to the agency or consultant. Any costs for these services will be outside of the scope of this RFP and is expected to be billed and paid for separately.

CONTRACT TERM

NECC reserves the right to accept the proposal deemed best for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and NECC. The Contract will be awarded to the Vendor who offers the best combination of price, capability and service options as determined by NECC. The lowest bid does NOT constitute the winning bid. NECC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, wholly or in part.

The successful Contractor will be required to sign and submit the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract form within five (5) days of the date of award.

The contract term will commence on August 1, 2023 for a period of one (1) year with the option to renew for two (2) one (1) year terms.

PRICING

Total budget for year one is \$138,000.

REQUIRED: Proposals should clearly provide a break-out of the amount to be allocated to advertising costs and the amount to be allocated for management.

Invoices will be required to be submitted monthly and must clearly outline dates of service, services provided including specific and detailed budget breakdown including a separate breakout of costs for advertising and specific management fees for services.

All invoices should be emailed directly to accountspayable@necc.mass.edu and amcphersonmesa@necc.mass.edu and include the purchase order number on all invoices.

Why Should We Choose Your Firm as Our Digital Marketing Partner?

Vendor responses should provide details about their capabilities for the following:

- Please describe your agency or consultant's process for helping Northern Essex Community College meet its online advertising and marketing goals.

- Please provide a break-out of your fees detailing how much of the budget will be used for advertising versus management costs and/or other fees (a percentage is acceptable).
- Please provide information and case studies about any experience, knowledge or past/current services provided to educational institutions.
- Provide an overview of how you will operate as a consultant/partner (ie: new channel recommendations, target audience analysis, research and discovery for untapped potential markets, etc.), and not just as a firm that executes deliverables.
- Please provide information regarding the extent of NECC resources (manpower or otherwise) that will be required to execute the campaign. (This will allow us to factor in internal resource allocation expectations/requirements.)
- Provide a list of advertising channels your agency has experience/expertise working with. (i.e. Google Adwords search/display/remarketing, programmatic, geotargeting, social media ads, online radio, video, etc.)
- Provide detailed information regarding the agency or consultant's experience and reputation including a list of contactable references.
- The chosen agency or consultant must provide regular and ongoing campaign statistics and updates, tracking, and reporting.
 - How often will we receive reporting?
 - Will reporting include analysis and/or a review meeting/conference call? If so, how often?
 - Will we have access to any online reporting suites for daily reporting?
 - Please provide a sample report and/or access to a reporting portal for a review of the format and the level of detail that can be expected about our campaigns.
- Agency or consultant must provide insight and analysis for how they measure campaign effectiveness and recommendations for optimizing the campaign to maximize budget spend for lead generation. Please provide details regarding:
 - How will your team make use of data for improved results?
 - What specific campaign data will be evaluated to determine overall success?

APPENDIX A

NECC's Geographic Service Territory

Northern Essex Community College's "official" service territory consists of 22 cities/towns (with 27 separate zip codes) in the upper half of Massachusetts' Essex County. The zip codes listed below as "Core" (including those in New Hampshire) make up our prime target zone.

20 Core Zip Codes located in our "official" MA service territory:

Amesbury – 01913	Lawrence – 01840
Andover – 01810	Lawrence – 01841
Boxford – 01921	Lawrence – 01843
Byfield/Newbury – 01922	Merrimac – 01860
Georgetown – 01833	Methuen – 01844
Groveland – 01834	Newburyport – 01950
Haverhill – 01830	Newburyport – 01951
Haverhill – 01831	North Andover – 01845
Haverhill – 01832	Salisbury – 01952
Haverhill – 01835	West Newbury – 01985

16 Core Zip Codes in NH which happen to be located outside our "official" MA service territory:

Atkinson, NH – 03811	Kingston, NH – 03848
Danville, NH – 03819	Newton, NH – 03858
Derry, NH – 03038	Pelham, NH – 03076
East Hampstead, NH – 03826	Plaistow, NH – 03865
East Kingston, NH – 03827	Salem, NH – 03079
Hampstead, NH – 03841	Sandown, NH – 03873
Hampton, NH – 03842	Seabrook, NH – 03874
Kensington, NH – 03827	Windham, NH – 03087

7 Additional "Non-Core" Zip Codes included in our "official" MA service territory:

Dracut – 01826	Tewksbury – 01876
North Reading – 01864	Wakefield – 01880
Reading – 01867	Wilmington – 01887
Rowley – 01969	