



King County Library System  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

July 30, 2009

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS # 09-05

FOR

PROMOTIONAL/BRADED MERCHANDISE VENDOR

Proposals Due:

September 10, 2009, 5:00 P.M.

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## **SECTION ONE – PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

The King County Rural Library District, (dba King County Library System), is seeking proposals from qualified vendors for the purpose of obtaining information and firm bids for a Branded Merchandise Vendor of Record to handle all related production as described specifically herein.

The King County Library System (KCLS) is one of the top three largest circulating libraries in the United States. Located in the Puget Sound area, KCLS serves over one million residents at its 44 community libraries, 1 institutional library and a Traveling Library Center. KCLS provides access to a broad array of information resources ranging from electronic databases to books to music and video. KCLS is also the community resource for a wide variety of programs and activities for people of all ages. Established in 1942, KCLS is a special purpose government that is governed by a five-member Board of Trustees and operates under the constitution and laws of the State of Washington.

KCLS produces branded merchandise and materials for a variety of purposes and past production has included: banners, backpacks, t-shirts, display graphics, mugs, stickers, keychains, mousepads, book bags, just to name a few. Merchandise and quantities vary by year and budget availability.

The King County Library System seeks a promotional/branded merchandise vendor of record to produce high quality merchandise and products as needed. Specifications under Section 2 are representative of items anticipated. KCLS has a highly skilled and experienced in-house team that produces all the design and artwork for its promotional/branded merchandise needs.

## **SECTION TWO – SCOPE OF SERVICES**

***KCLS produces a variety of branded merchandise items each year. The following are items to bid on and will be used as the basis of comparison with other bids. (Please note that these items may or may not be purchased and specifications are subject to change):***

### **A. 100% fully compostable and biodegradable bags**

Size: 17" x 18" x 3"

T-shirt handles

1.75mil thickness

*1 color imprint front and back*

Quantity: 400,000 per year

### **B. CLEAR FACE STATIC STICKER**

3" x 11.5" rectangle

Qty: 1,000 pieces  
4 color spot

**C. T-SHIRTS**

Port & Co. Heavyweight t-shirt  
6.1 oz. 100% cotton  
White  
Qty: 5,000  
2 color imprint front and back  
Size: all XL

**D. BANNERS**

Polyflag banner, polyester  
Fabric 100 GMS Per Yd/weight  
4 color process imprint, one side  
6 grommets  
Qty 100

**E. MOUSEPADS**

See through Life Top (*name brand*) mousepad  
1 color plus background  
Qty: 5000

***SECTION THREE – PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS***

Firms interested in providing the services described above are requested to submit the following information. Responses to each item should appear in the same order as in this RFP and should designate by heading and paragraph the item to which the response applies. Please limit the length of your proposal, including appendices, to 30 pages, and please limit your proposal to one bound volume. Do not include any material outside of this volume.

Part One – Executive Summary

Each proposal should be accompanied by an executive summary not exceeding two pages which summarizes key points of the proposal and which is signed by an officer of the firm who is responsible for committing the firm's resources.

Part Two – Proposal Details

**A. Costs**

Costs for each item listed in Section 2 should be listed with cost per unit, total cost and any applicable setup fees. Typical lead times for each item should also be noted.

Charges associated with delivery and installation should be listed as separate line items in the proposal. The vendor shall be responsible for applying accurate taxes and fees in effect on the date of proposal submission. Each tax and fee to be paid by KCLS should be listed as a separate line item. The vendor shall be responsible for the payment of business registration fees, permits, licenses, business and occupation taxes and all other taxes except Washington state sales tax payable to the vendor by KCLS.

## **B. Company Qualifications**

### 1. Company Information

- A. Provide in 100 words or less a description of your company.
- B. Provide your company's vision and customer service goals.
- C. Provide a brief bio of key company personnel

### 2. Current Customers

Provide a list of 5 to 10 customers for which you currently provide Promotional Merchandise solutions, indicating whether any of them are public sector clients. The list should include the following:

- a) Name and address of customer
- b) Number of years service provided
- c) Size of client
- d) Types of services provided

## **C. References**

List at least three references for which similar work is or has been conducted and give the name, title and telephone number of persons who may be contacted for reference concerning the services you provided.

## **D. Competitive Advantage**

- 1. Describe the main competitive advantage of your firm.

2. Please describe any experience you have providing promotional merchandise into the strategic development of client's marketing campaigns. Please provide details and attach relevant case studies.
3. Please describe any experience you have supplying promotional merchandise to support client marketing events. Please provide details and attach relevant case studies.
4. Please describe your customization and specialized services as they relate to the promotional merchandise category.
5. Please describe your breadth of offering. Include components such as number of categories offered, total number of items offered, and any other factors that clearly show the breadth of offering.
6. Please describe your customer/client service model.

#### **E. Order processing**

1. Please describe your ordering process.
2. KCLS would prefer that vendor's current website allow search capabilities and allow searches by product, price and name. Can your company meet this requirement?
3. KCLS would prefer vendors that have a process of creating a standard level of quality across products. Does your company meet this requirement? If so please describe your process.
4. Does your current system or process provide a formal monitoring to insure KCLS brand compliance on all orders?

#### ***SECTION FOUR – SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS***

One executed original proposal, clearly marked on the cover, and three (3) copies of the proposal shall be submitted. The proposal shall be clearly marked on the outside of the transmittal package with the following information:

**Organization's Name**  
**PROMOTIONAL/BRANDED MERCHANDISE VENDOR Proposal**

The proposal must be received no later than 5:00 P.M. on September 10, 2009 at:

King County Library System  
Attn: Purchasing  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

Proposals received by KCLS after 5pm (Pacific Time), September 10, 2009, will not be considered. Late proposals will be destroyed. Proposals received before the due date will be held in a secured area until the time of opening.

Proposals must be signed by a corporate official, owner or a person who has been authorized to make such a commitment.

KCLS does not conduct a public opening of proposals, nor are evaluation "progress reports" available. Notification of award will be sent to all bidders.

The Proposal should clearly state the total length of time during which the services, and any related prices presented in the proposal are valid and reliable. It is required that this time period be no less than one hundred twenty (120) days from the date the proposals are due.

Organizations shall respond to each and every requirement contained in the "Proposal Requirements" section of this RFP. Responses must be in the same order in which the points appear in the RFP. The proposal must be clear, unambiguous, and capable of being understood without reference to other documentation. Failure to address a particular requirement shall be presumed to mean that the function or requirement is unavailable.

Vendors are advised that the submission of multiple proposals, or alternative approaches to specific sections of the requirements will be considered non-compliant and those proposals will be disqualified. We are relying on the vendor as the expert to identify in its proposal the approach which is believed to be the most effective to produce the required systems and services.

No substitutions will be accepted on any of the components unless the vendor can provide proof that the substituted equipment meets or exceeds the specifications, reliability, warranty and pricing of the equipment specified by the King County Library System.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this RFP may result in disqualification.

The organization must clearly state that the proposal submitted presents a true offer of services and/or materials. It must be clearly stated that the proposal is not a result of any direct or indirect coordination or collusion with other firms submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

An organization may withdraw or modify its proposal in writing by delivery service, certified U.S. Mail, or by hand delivery at any time prior to the RFP deadline for submission.

**SECTION FIVE – REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION**

Questions and requests for clarification concerning this RFP shall be submitted **IN WRITING** no later than **5:00 P.M. PST Thursday, August 13** to:

King County Library System  
Attn: Purchasing  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

The words “**PROMOTIONAL/BRANDED MERCHANDISE VENDOR Proposal Inquiry**” shall appear on the envelope. Inquiries shall state the page and the applicable RFP section or paragraph to which the question(s) pertain. Faxed requests for clarification will not be accepted. Confirming receipt of questions is the responsibility of the submitting organization.

The organization shall be responsible for requesting clarification concerning the RFP to allow the organization to respond specifically, thoroughly, and clearly to every specification, requirement, or question presented in the RFP. KCLS shall in no way be responsible for any errors or ambiguities in the RFP. A failure of KCLS to respond to any request for clarification shall not be considered by any organization that KCLS agrees or disagrees with any statement, which may be contained in the request for clarification.

All clarifications to the RFP will be distributed in writing to all organizations that have provided contact information for this purpose. The source of an inquiry occasioning a clarification shall not be given.

Any information provided after distribution of the RFP is for clarification only and not binding on KCLS.

**SECTION SIX – EVALUATION**

KCLS intends to select the proposal that is most advantageous to itself. The responses to this RFP will be evaluated by a Selection Committee to be established for such purpose. The evaluation will include a review of all proposals based on the following criteria:

1. Understanding the needs of KCLS. Responsiveness to the scope of services outlined in this RFP, and soundness of approach
2. Cost;

3. Qualifications of vendor, including previous experience with similar work, and
4. Accuracy and quality of deliverables, adherence to schedules, and relative success/quality of products (as determined through reference checks)

KCLS reserves the right to reject any and all proposals for any reason.

KCLS reserves the right to accept other than the lowest priced proposal and to negotiate with any organization when the best interests of the Library are served by so doing.

KCLS may invite one or more representatives from any organization to meet or talk with KCLS representatives for the purpose of clarification of the vendor’s proposal.

KCLS may at its sole discretion waive any irregularity or informality in a proposal submitted by any organization.

***SECTION SEVEN – SCHEDULE***

KCLS has set the following tentative schedule for the selection process:

07/30/2009	RFP Issued
08/13/2009	Deadline for receipt of written requests for clarification
08/20/09	Responses to written requests for clarification
09/10/09 5:00 P.M.	Deadline for receipt of proposals
09/10/09	Opening of proposals
09/10/09	Evaluation of proposals begins

***SECTION EIGHT – SPECIAL CONDITIONS***

Organization Responsibility

1. Any organization submitting a response agrees to all the rules and conditions required in this RFP. All materials submitted in response to the RFP shall become the property of KCLS. The organization’s proposal and the RFP shall become part of any contract that is negotiated with the successful organization unless modified in writing by the contract.
2. The successful organization shall be required to assume responsibility for delivery of goods and/or services as defined in the contract.
3. The organization shall be required to demonstrate that there is in effect all licenses, permits and authorizations to provide all products and services it proposes.

4. It is the organization's responsibility to ensure that the RFP is not defective and does not inadvertently restrict competition. Protests to the RFP must be in writing and be made prior to the due date to permit time for revisions to be issued.
5. The cost for developing proposals in response to this RFP is entirely the obligation of the organization and shall not be charged to KCLS in any manner.

Alternate Organization Selection. If KCLS fails to negotiate a contract with the organization of first choice, KCLS shall reserve the right to enter into new contract negotiations with an alternate organization(s).

Payment Schedule. KCLS payments, subject to negotiations, shall be made to the organization not more than forty-five (45) days after KCLS receives the organization's invoice for goods/services received as specified in the contract between KCLS and the organization selected.

Wages. The organization shall be required to pay any wages or salary required by the laws or regulations of any government entity having jurisdiction.

News Release. Mention of KCLS, staff, or programs in advertising, customer lists, photographs, or articles in the professional literature pertaining to an award resulting from proposals made in response to this RFP shall not be made by any organization without prior written approval from the KCLS administration.

Written Contract. KCLS and the selected organization shall negotiate a contract and nothing shall be binding on either party until the contract is in writing and signed by both parties, except organization is obligated to keep its proposal in effect for period specified in this RFP.

#### ***SECTION NINE – PROTESTS TO AWARD***

Protests concerning the award of this RFP shall be submitted in writing to:

King County Library System  
Attn: Business and Finance Manager  
960 Newport Way NW  
Issaquah, WA 98027

#### **Protest to Award of PROMOTIONAL/BRANDED MERCHANDISE VENDOR**

Organizations should clearly state the grounds for their protest and the requested action. Faxed protest letters will be accepted if received by the deadline below. Confirming receipt of fax is the responsibility of the protesting organization.

Deadline. Letters of protest must be received by KCLS no more than one week after RFP award has been announced.

Response to Protest. Written response to protest letters will be composed jointly by the Selection Committee and the Business and Finance Manager. Responses will be available within approximately two weeks of receipt of protest. Written responses are mailed via certified mail to the protesting organization.