

Child Care Family Focus Groups RFP Applicant Questions

1. Would the NY Office of Child Care be providing branding guidelines to support the development of messaging and mock-up's?

The Office of Child Care will provide overall branding guidelines for City government programs and initiatives, though the vendor's scope includes development of branding guidelines specifically for Office of Child Care initiatives moving forward.

2. What is the expectation for face-to-face verses virtual engagements with families? Would a hybrid approach be considered?

Focus groups can include a mix of in-person and virtual so long as the format allows the vendor to capture a representative array of family perspectives.

3. Is MOCCECE providing the location for the focus groups? If not, is the vendor responsible for finding them?

The vendor is responsible for identifying and securing the location for focus groups.

4. For the branding assets and collateral to be developed, is the consultant responsible for hard printing, or are digital copies acceptable?

The vendor should anticipate some printing needs during the design and iteration process. Final products can be delivered digitally.

5. What (if any!) existing feedback and data can we review about NYC's early care and education program offerings and messaging?

MOCCECE will collate any existing feedback from past research efforts to share during the project kick-off.

6. Does MOCCECE have in-house translation services for messaging? Or would you prefer for your selected partner to translate materials such as new messaging?

Final products must be translated into all languages used by NYC Public Schools. With appropriate lead time, the NYCPS translation team can support.

7. Given that "multiple City agencies will have input," how will the approval process be streamlined to ensure the 5-month timeline is met?

MOCCECE will designate a project lead who will coordinate across all involved agencies and ensure a streamlined process for input.

8. Who will serve as reviewers for the new materials? Final decisionmakers?

Reviewers will include staff in the Mayor's Office of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, NYC Public Schools, Administration for Children's Services, and the City Hall communications team. MOCCECE is responsible for the final decision.

9. The RFP mentions "developing brand assets". Can you specify the expected volume and type of assets (e.g., logo suite, social media templates, style guide, or full-scale campaign creative)?

Final output should include, but is not limited to:

- Primary and sub brand names
- Logo suite
- Brand elements (e.g., color, typeface, design style)
- Brand guidelines / style guide
- Brand graphic files
- Message framework

10. For the minimum of 13–17 total focus groups, is the vendor expected to cover participant incentives and recruitment costs within the \$250,000 budget, or will the City assist with recruitment through its agency partners?

Vendor is expected to cover participant incentives and recruitment costs. The City can assist with providing data and contact information to reach potential families.

11. Beyond English and Spanish, are there specific "multiple languages" the City prioritizes for focus group outreach to ensure cultural competence?

In addition to English and Spanish, the vendor should consider a family focus group in Mandarin.

12. The RFP requires the organization's annual budget for the last two years. If applying as a lead vendor with a subcontractor, are annual budgets required for both entities?

No, annual budgets are only required for the lead applicant. If applying with a subcontractor, you do not need to submit budget information for the subcontractor(s). This requirement applies solely to the lead organization.

13. Regarding message testing, are you envisioning that this will be qualitative testing through the focus groups and interviews or as an additional quantitative component? (We often message test through focus groups, but have other tools in our research toolbox, too!)

Open to the vendor's recommended approach.

14. Will the City aid in the recruitment of early childhood providers and educators to participate in focus groups (e.g., access to existing family/provider networks, community partners, or outreach channels)? This will help us design an outreach strategy and determine where additional recruitment support may be needed.

The City can provide contact information to assist with child care provider recruitment.

15. Will all participants be allowed to accept incentives?

The vendor will be able to provide incentives to family and child care provider participants.

16. Is there a preference for the research to be conducted in person or virtually? If in-person groups, would MOCCECE partner with the selected vendor to identify and secure cost-effective venues (e.g., community-based spaces), or should the vendor plan to source and budget for rental facilities independently?

Focus groups can include a mix of in-person and virtual so long as the format allows the vendor to capture a representative array of family perspectives. The vendor is responsible for identifying and securing the location for focus groups.

17. Is there existing messaging that you'd like to retain, or examples you draw inspiration from for the future of this work?

There have been multiple iterations of 3-K and Pre-K branding over the past decade; several elements may be worth retaining, which can be reviewed during the project kick-off.

18. Can you clarify what you mean by “multiple proposals for future-state messaging and branding” ? Are you looking for different brand/message options to choose from? What does “future-state” mean in this context?

Yes, we are looking for options to choose from. “Future state” refers to the branding and messaging to be used in 2027 and beyond.

19. What kind of dissemination (if any) would we be responsible for following brand asset and message development?

None

20. To what extent are you expecting a fully developed research plan with detailed methodology for each stage vs. a high-level approach that will be refined post-award?

High-level approach that will be refined post-award, so long as there is enough information to justify the project budget

21. Are you looking for a fleshed-out budget with line items, or will that be refined post-award?

The budget should include at least a high-level breakdown between personnel costs and other-than-personnel costs.

22. What expectations do you have for how vendors should account for the cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity of New York City families throughout the engagement? Are there any specific racial or ethnic groups you want to be sure to include in the qualitative research?

Families included in the focus groups should be broadly representative of the overall population of New York City families – ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically. It will also be important to gather perspectives from immigrant families and families with a mix of experiences in using public benefits. The specific mix can be finalized post-award.

23. Will MOCCECE facilitate introductions with key stakeholders (including agency leaders, policymakers, advocates, and partners) for the stakeholder interviews, or should the chosen vendor plan to help?

MOCCECE will primarily facilitate these introductions

24. Will MOCCECE provide access to parent lists for qualitative research, should the vendor plan on acquiring those separately, or will it be some combination?

MOCCECE will be able to provide some family data, though the vendor may also need to acquire additional lists independently

25. Will MOCCECE facilitate introductions to educators and providers for qualitative research, should the vendor plan on acquiring those separately, or will it be some combination?

MOCCECE will primarily facilitate these introductions

26. Can you clarify the expected scope of the brand audit? For example, how far back should it go? Does it only include publicly-run programs or privately-run organizations as well? Should it include only publicly-facing materials, or also internal communications, provider-level adaptations, and partner-generated materials? Any additional detail here would be appreciated.

Public-facing materials dating back to the launch of Pre-K for All in 2014

27. Is there any current brand architecture or design that the new brand needs to fit within, such as existing pre-K branding?

The new brand needs to fit within the overall City government branding framework.

28. Do you anticipate the findings of the research will be released publicly?

A summary of the materials could be released later. Detailed findings will be for internal uses only.

29. When you ask for the company's budget, does a certified letter asserting the financial health of the company suffice?

A certified letter from a CPA or Audited financial statements should suffice.

30. The link to the "Doing Business Data Form" on page 1 does not work – could you please post a new link?

Please use this link: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdfs/services/doing-business-data-form.pdf>

31. When you say, "copy of organization's malpractice insurance policy," does a sample certificate of insurance suffice?

Certificate of insurance is what we need.

32. Can you confirm that the intended brand deliverables are: primary and sub brand names and logo(s), brand elements (e.g., color, typeface, design style), brand guidelines, brand graphic files, and message framework? Are there additional brand deliverables that need to be included in the scope?

Final output should include, but is not limited to:

- Primary and sub brand names
- Logo suite
- Brand elements (e.g., color, typeface, design style)
- Brand guidelines / style guide
- Brand graphic files
- Message framework

33. Under IV. Program Description of the RFP, Can you clarify what is meant by "massive marketing campaign"? Does this mean a marketing plan; a marketing plan and creative; or something else?

Marketing plan and creative

34. In reference to the inclusion of “multiple languages” referenced in the RFP, does the MOCCECE have a known or preferred selection of languages that the vendor should consider? Or is it to the vendor to recommend which languages to include?

At minimum, this should include English and Spanish, and potentially Mandarin. Beyond this, the vendor can make any other recommendations.

35. Is the expectation that the research will represent all five boroughs and therefore that the findings and recommendations will roll out across all five boroughs?

Yes. The final outputs will apply citywide.

36. Can you clarify that a “copy of organization’s malpractice insurance policy” is equal to business liability insurance?

It should be a Certificate of Insurance from your insurance broker.

37. Can you please provide the Application Cover Sheet?

An Application Cover Sheet was not included as part of the RFP materials. Applicants are welcome to include their own cover sheet with their submission.

38. Can you please clarify anticipated award announcement date? It is listed as “on or around April 20” on page 1, and April 6 on page 4.

Announcement date will be on or around April 20th.

39. Is there a page limit for the application questions?

There is no page limit to the application questions.

40. The qualifications and approach requested in application questions 1-6 have some overlap. Would you prefer proposals to be organized around those questions or around the Criteria for proposal evaluation, for easier scoring?

Please respond based on the questions in the application.

41. Do you have a preferred budget format? Should we also submit a separate budget narrative?

Please include a budget table. A brief narrative may also be submitted, if preferred.

42. Are you looking for an organizational chart for our firm, or for how the project team will be organized?

The response should include information about how the project team will be organized

43. In which field in the submission form should we upload our malpractice insurance policy?

We have added a field for this submission.

44. Are there any MWBE requirements or goals for this RFP?

There are no specific Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) participation requirements or goals associated with this RFP. However, we strongly encourage submissions from MWBE firms and partnerships that promote diversity and inclusion.

45. Given MOCCECE's emphasis on equity and mixed delivery models, are there priority family segments or neighborhoods (e.g., communities newly targeted for

2K, areas with historically lower uptake of 3K/Pre K) that you expect to be oversampled or explicitly included in the family focus groups?

This should be discussed post-award, though the City will likely want to oversample in areas that have been historically less likely to participate in early childhood services and/or that are more likely to be disconnected from government services.

46. Beyond English and Spanish, are there priority languages or communities that you would like to see reflected in the research and subsequent messaging, consistent with the City's broader language access policies?

Research and message testing should be done in English and Spanish at minimum, with Mandarin as a recommended third. All final materials will need to be translated into all languages used by New York City Public Schools

47. Is the MOIA language access team a partner in this project?

The City can provide some language support for translation of materials, etc. The vendor should plan to supply translation support for focus groups.

48. How should this branding effort align with or differentiate itself from state level early childhood messaging and the Governor's partnership with the Mayor on universal child care, 2 K/2 Care, and related initiatives, so families experience a coherent narrative?

The City has its own unique branding, separate from the State. However, this alignment is something we can continue to evaluate during the brand development process.

49. What existing quantitative and qualitative data on family awareness, preferences, pain points, and enrollment patterns can be shared to avoid duplicating past research and to allow for more targeted focus groups and message testing?

As part of the project kick-off, MOCCECE will collate existing materials from City agencies and public reports.

50. Will City agencies lead media buying and campaign deployment in house, or do you expect the brand and marketing partner to play a role in media/channel strategy to ensure the brand reaches families who have historically been least connected to city funded early childhood programs?

The vendor may make recommendations on media and channel strategy, though the City will lead media buying and campaign deployment.

51. Can we propose creative/efficient research designs beyond traditional focus groups for providers (e.g., qual boards, more 1:1 interviews, broader provider outreach), while still meeting the terms of the RFP?

Yes, we are open to multiple approaches so long as representative family and provider input is gathered.

52. Given you have existing relationships with the key stakeholders (program directors, early childhood providers, etc.) would your team be able to handling introductions/recruitment if we run the interviews?

Yes, MOCCECE can facilitate relationships to key early childhood stakeholders

53. How would you like us to prioritize representation in the research: primarily by geography (across boroughs), by household income/socioeconomic status, by supply/demand dynamics, race/ethnicity, or a mix of these?

A mix of these

54. Are there specific neighborhoods or segments (e.g., high-supply/low-demand vs. low-supply/high-demand areas) you especially want represented in the work?

Families who have been less likely to participate in early childhood programs in the past

55. Beyond English and Spanish, which additional languages are priority for message testing and materials (e.g., Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic, Russian, Hebrew/Yiddish, Urdu)?

Final materials should be translated into all languages used by NYCPS for parent communication

56. Can you confirm whether the \$250,000 six-month budget is intended to cover only research and brand development (no paid media), or if any paid components are expected within this phase?

The budget is not meant to include any paid media

57. Within that \$250,000, are there any non-negotiable line items (e.g., a minimum number of focus groups or specific vendor costs) that we should protect as we shape a more efficient approach?

The minimum number of focus groups should align to the specifications within the RFP

58. Given that clarification questions are technically due today, is there any flexibility on timing or a preferred format for submitting them (single consolidated memo vs. form, etc.)?

59. Who will be our primary day-to-day counterpart on your side for the research and branding work, and how should we route follow-up questions during the process?

MOCCECE will designate a project manager to lead day-to-day work on the City's side