



Request for Quotations:

Studying Data Literacy Among Small Transit Agencies

Issue Date: July 10, 2024

Deadline for Responses: August 23, 2024

Contact: Andrew Carpenter, carpenter@ctaa.org

Request for Quotations: Studying Data Literacy Among Small Transit Agencies

RFQ Number: 387153-012

What This Is

The Community Transportation Association of America, through its National Center for Applied Transit Technology (N-CATT), is soliciting bids from consultants to support N-CATT to study data literacy among small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies. This study will help N-CATT and the Federal Transit Administration, as well as the subjects of the study, understand how the industry currently uses data and could better do so in the future.

Interested parties must follow the instructions and format set forth in this Request for Quotations, for which responses are due no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on August 23, 2024.

About N-CATT

The National Center for Applied Transit Technology's (N-CATT) goal is to improve and make more efficient small-urban, rural and tribal transit service by assisting local transit agencies in understanding, selecting, and otherwise planning to incorporate new technology into service. N-CATT helps transportation agencies, managers, and decision-makers, such as board members or public officials, identify promising technologies, practices, and opportunities that accomplish agencies' goals or resolve particular challenges.

The recent burst of technology-based innovations in transportation has largely focused on dense urban areas. N-CATT seeks to spread the benefits of these developments to smaller transportation agencies that lack the resources and capacities of large-urban systems to research, analyze, and test new products that could enhance their services. This includes educating system managers and helping them to encourage influential stakeholders to support needed technological advancements.

Among its activities, N-CATT hosts resources such as guidebooks, podcasts, and webinars on its website for interested agencies to engage with as it relates to them. In addition, N-CATT provides technical assistance in various formats: hands-on workshops, Technology Summits for priority-setting at the state or regional level, and Strategic Technology Technical Assistance Teams for one-on-one technical assistance with N-CATT, consultants, and recipient transit agencies.

Overview of Services Required

The contract for the workshop consultant services will be held between the consultant and the Community Transportation Association of America, which operates N-CATT.

General Framework

Target Audience: The primary audience for this study will be for N-CATT staff and FTA to evaluate how to improve the use of data among small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies. The secondary audience is small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies to understand how they can improve their use of data to improve their systems.

Desired Outcomes

1. A defined and measurable framework for evaluating Data Literacy for small-urban, rural, and tribal transit agencies
2. Improved understanding among N-CATT, FTA, transit agencies, and other interested entities of the state of data literacy across this target audience
3. Knowledge for how to improve data literacy for the target audience
4. Improved data literacy for the target audience

Scope of Work

CTAA anticipates the selected consultant will perform the following steps:

1. Task 1: Framework and Plan for Data Literacy Study
 - a. Work with N-CATT staff to develop a framework and work plan to carry out the Data Literacy Study
 - b. Craft the Study to define data literacy among small transit agencies and to measure the level of literacy based on that definition
 - c. Craft the study to determine the most important areas of improvement for N-CATT's target audience
 - d. Craft the study to identify important resources, and their formats, that N-CATT should develop to improve data literacy
 - e. Include a plan to provide follow-up monitoring of data literacy measures among the target audience
 - f. **Deliverables:** Framework and work plan
2. Task 2: Conduct the Data Literacy Study
 - a. Carry out the work plan agreed to in Task 1
 - b. If possible, attend two state transit association conferences to survey or interview attendees, as they are N-CATT's target audience
 - c. **Deliverable:** Complete Data Literacy Study
3. Task 3: Data Literacy Report
 - a. Use the study results to define and determine data literacy among small transit agencies

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- b. Incorporate findings into a Maturity Matrix to exemplify literacy levels
 - c. Identify important information and insights from study findings
 - d. Identify resources, products, and/or tools that N-CATT should develop to improve data literacy among its target audience
 - e. **Deliverable:** Report of findings from Data Literacy Study
4. Task 4: Establish N-CATT Performance Measures Based on Findings
 - a. Based on the study's findings, establish performance measures that N-CATT staff, their evaluator, and FTA can use to determine the effectiveness and impact of the resources developed based on the Study's outcomes
 - b. Provide a baseline against which to evaluate performance measures
 - c. Coordinate with N-CATT's Evaluator to develop a plan for evaluating performance
 - d. **Deliverable:** Performance tracking plan
5. Task 5: Provide Ongoing Data Literacy Monitoring
 - a. Carry out the plan for follow-up monitoring agreed to in Task 1
 - b. Assess how the state of Data Literacy has changed from the original study through the end of the project year
 - c. **Deliverable:** Follow-up report evaluating changes in data literacy among N-CATT's target audience

The timeline for each deliverable will be worked out with CTAA and consultants. However, all work will be finished by March 31, 2025.

Price

CTAA intends to execute a fixed-price contract with the selected consultant. Unless negotiated differently to both parties' satisfaction, the term of this contract would be for milestone payments based on the above scope of work, to be made to the consultant upon completion and acceptance of all work and work products under each task.

Bid Requirements

CTAA will accept and review bids that contain the following information:

- 1) A 1-page cover sheet with:
 - a. Respondent's name / Firm Name
 - b. telephone number,
 - c. email address,
 - d. physical and mailing address, and
 - e. A one-paragraph summary abstract of the bid that states (i) qualifications to perform the indicated work (one sentence), (ii) how the bidder intends to approach the indicated work (maximum of three sentences), (iii) the names, titles, corporate affiliations and pertinent experience of all individuals the bidder intends to have conduct the indicated work (one sentence per individual), and (iv) the fixed price, exclusive of travel, for which the bidder is prepared to perform this work, for each workshop for which the bidder indicates interest.

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- 2) A narrative of no more than five pages in length that explains – in sufficient detail – how the bidder would carry out the tasks detailed above, as well as the bidder’s understanding of the project’s goals, target audience, and activities. CTAA will look for demonstrations that the bidder is able to provide high-quality work that provides actionable information/conclusions, and; the bidder’s experience and qualifications in a manner that demonstrates their ability to conduct work similar in nature and scope to what is requested. **CTAA also encourages respondents to provide suggestions based on their expertise.**
- 3) A staffing plan that includes:
 - a. A narrative of no more than two pages in length that names the individuals who will carry out this work, briefly explaining each person’s role(s) in the project and identifying which individual will be CTAA’s principal point of contact concerning the work to be performed, and
 - b. For each individual being proposed by this consultant, a one-page resume or CV that describes that individual’s qualifications and experience and summarizes previous work performed by the individual that is relevant to this solicitation, and
- 4) The price for which the bidder is prepared to perform this work.
- 5) Statement that the consultant has legal authority to work in the United States. All consultants and subcontractors must have no exclusions in SAM
- 6) Statement that the consultant is not debarred or suspended from contracting with the federal government
- 7) CTAA does not anticipate bids from teams of more than one consulting firm or entity. However, if any of the individuals being proposed are not employees of the firm submitting this bid, an acceptable bid must include a letter or other signed statement from the submitter’s proposed partner(s) agreeing to be included in this bid, and the bid must include items (3) through (5) from the above list for every proposed subcontractor or other external partner that is included in this bid. If the bidder has roles for which some portion of the staffing is “to be determined,” the above staffing plan must include a convincing explanation for how the bidder will address that staffing need without jeopardizing timely and satisfactory completion of the work being proposed. All subcontractors must also have no exclusions in SAM.
- 8) Three work samples that highlight consultants’ ability to perform the work outlined above, preferably that are similar in type or topic to that described in this RFQ. The samples should reflect the work of the individuals in the staffing plan so that CTAA can directly gauge consultants’ work quality.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Participation

If more than 50 percent of the staff-hours proposed to be spent by employees of a certified DBE, that bid will receive additional consideration, as detailed under “Selection Criteria,” below.

Selection Criteria and Process

CTAA staff will review the submitted bids that are received at or prior to 11:59pm (Eastern Time) on **August 23, 2024**. Staff will not engage in any communication with the bidder or their employees or proposed partners prior to making its decision.

In reviewing consultants' submissions to this RFQ, CTAA will apply the following selection criteria:

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| Understanding of work to be done | 5 points 1 = Does not meet expectations 3 = Meets expectations 5 = Far outperforms expectations |
| How the consultant proposes to carry out the described work to CTAA's satisfaction within the indicated time frame and within the consultant's proposed budget; and if consultant provides meaningful suggestions to improve project. | 5 points |
| Proposed staffing plan, in terms of its reasonableness and in terms of the skills and qualifications of proposed staff. | 5 points |
| Work samples, in terms of topic coverage, types of documents, and quality of the writing to explain whatever topics are discussed. | 5 points |
| Cost, exclusive of travel | 2 points Scored relative to other bids |
| DBE status: if at least 50% of the staff-hours proposed on this project will be performed by employees of an entity that is a certified DBE in one or more states where it currently does business, the bid will receive 1 additional point | 0 or 1 points |

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Bidders should be aware that this is part of a research project funded through a cooperative agreement between CTAA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and they must be experienced and able to carry out work that must comply with applicable FTA regulations, policies and guidelines. Bidders without prior experience working with FTA or its grantees will need to be sure their submissions demonstrate a capacity to carry out FTA-funded work.

The selected bidder and subcontractors may not have exclusions when searched in SAM.gov and must remain in good standing.

CTAA reserves the right to request additional information before making an award. CTAA also reserves the right to seek clarification from any bidder or offeror about any statement in its bid that CTAA finds ambiguous.

Selection will be made based on best value.

Submission Instructions

Please submit your bid as a single document, in PDF format, to carpenter@ctaa.org no later than 11:59pm Eastern Time on **August 23, 2024**. No hard copy submissions will be accepted.

CTAA reserves the right to reject any and all bids in response to this RFQ, and may terminate this solicitation without notice at any time prior to entering into a contract for the indicated work to be performed.