

# Measuring the Social Value of Postal Services to the Nation U.S. Postal Regulatory Commission

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

Issued May 7, 2010

The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC or Commission) is an independent establishment of the executive branch of the federal government with regulatory oversight over the United States Postal Service (USPS or Postal Service). It is composed of five Commissioners supported by staff from its four operating offices, one of which is the Office of Accountability and Compliance (OAC). OAC is responsible for technical analysis and formulation of policy recommendations for the Commission in both domestic and international matters.

The PRC is seeking research proposals to quantify the social value of postal services. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the impact (costs and/or benefits) of the community presence of the Postal Service (post offices, daily delivery to homes, its (competitive) products, etc.) on:

- Community security and public safety impacts of the presence of USPS personnel (i.e., carriers, post offices).
- The benefits in terms of real estate values, increased business, etc. of being located near a post office.
- The role of lower priced postal products, e.g. competitive parcels or expedited services, in keeping the price of these services, including those of competitors, affordable.
- The value of the national street address and ZIP code system to emergency workers, businesses, utilities, researchers, and government.
- Environmental impact of mail delivery.
- Economic impact of providing middle-class jobs in the community.
- Value of providing affordable advertising and fulfillment options to small businesses.
- Civic pride and federal government presence.
- Linking remote communities commercially and socially with the rest of the Nation

Accompanying this RFP is an exploratory document prepared for the Postal Regulatory Commission by the *Urban Institute* to formulate a framework for the study of the social value of postal services. The document is entitled, "*A Framework for Considering the Social Value of Postal Services*". Potential investigators may find this document helpful in constructing their research proposals.

The Commission encourages proposal submissions that utilize techniques drawn from technical disciplines such as economics, sociology (including public sociology, communities studies and network analysis), anthropology (including social anthropology), social geography and geomatics, political science and public administration, and social psychology.

### Research Proposal Guidelines

The proposal should include:

1. Full contact information including a point of contact (POC).

2. Description of the investigators' qualifications, including a resume with publications and references, and copies of recent research work.
3. Detailed description of the proposed research investigation.
4. Analytical techniques, data sources, and testing to be used in the research analysis. Include a short discussion on expected results.
5. Investigators must be willing to make research presentations to the full Commission and other interested parties.
6. Cost, including a detailed budget, for the research work.

### **Research Deliverables**

Provide a written report that describes the:

- research investigation in detail.
- theoretical and empirical models used.
- hypotheses developed and tested.
- analytical techniques tested and used.
- variables created, tested and used.
- data sources.
- results with discussions on the robustness of the results.

Please include all programs and data used in the research.

### **Timeline**

The timeline for the RFP is:

- RFP posted to website (date of issuance): **May 7, 2010**
- Proposals due: **June 21, 2010**
- Evaluations completed: **July 20, 2010**
- Notice to proposers: **July 30, 2010**
- Period of Performance: **3 months** following contract signing.
- Deliverables due:

### **How to Submit the Proposal**

Responses to this Statement of Work are due no later than 45 days following the date of issuance. Responses, in hard-copy format, should be directed to the attention of Ms. Shoshana M. Grove, Secretary and Chief Administrative Officer, Postal Regulatory Commission, 901 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20268-0001. No emailed responses will be accepted. If there are questions, please call Margaret Cigno at 202-789-6855.