

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
For Strategic Plan Development

**FOR THE METROPOLITAN
LIBRARY SERVICE AGENCY
(MELSA)**

Response Deadline

June 13, 2025

Issued by

**METROPOLITAN LIBRARY SERVICE AGENCY
(MELSA)**

**1619 Dayton Avenue, Suite 314
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55104
Sherry Wichitchu, Executive Director
e-mail: sherry@melsa.org**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. Purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP)

The Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) is seeking consulting services to assist the Board, staff, and member library representatives in developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the regional system. This Request for Proposal provides the instructions for submitting, the criteria by which a vendor may be selected, and the contractual terms by which the Metropolitan Library Service Agency prefers to manage the relationship between MELSA and the selected vendor. MELSA seeks responses that address all of the requirements outlined in this RFP.

B. About Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)

The Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) is a government entity, funded by the State of Minnesota through Regional Library Basic System Support, Regional Library Telecommunications Aid, and the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund. MELSA is a regional public library system that promotes cooperation among its eight-member library systems (counties of Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, and Washington, and Saint Paul Public Library) and provides the libraries and the public with access to great resources, programs, and other important library services. MELSA is governed by a Board of Trustees, comprised of Commissioners from each member county and an appointment from the City of Saint Paul. Library Directors from all eight systems make up the Advisory Board.

C. Objective and Scope of Work

The Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) seeks professional consulting services to assist the Board, staff, and member library representatives in developing a comprehensive strategic plan for the regional system. Outcomes of the plan will include regional system goals, objectives, service priorities, and activities to meet patron and member library needs for the next three to five years.

MELSA is seeking a professional and experienced facilitator or facilitation team to perform the following:

- Facilitate the strategic planning process using methods conducive to a federated library system providing direct services to the public and support to member libraries.
- Collect, analyze, and interpret research, data, and input from stakeholders.
- Facilitate planning meetings and input sessions.
- Facilitate revisions and/or creation of mission and vision statements and core values.
- In conjunction with MELSA's staff, Governing and Advisory Board members, draft, with the possibility for revisions, a strategic plan that includes a mission and vision statement and core values, to be shared with stakeholders, including the Minnesota Department of Education.

Final deliverables to include:

- MELSA Mission, Vision and Core Values
- A narrative report of the process undertaken that supports and documents the work performed throughout the process and a clear, accessible strategic plan that clearly defines service priorities, goals, measurable objectives and activities.
- Forward-thinking process for review, evaluation and future adjustments to the plan.

II. RESPONSE INFORMATION

A. Schedule

This RFP was issued Thursday, May 15, 2025.

Responses will be received until 3:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on Friday, June 13, 2025, in electronic format. Responses will be received at: sherry@melsa.org.

Estimated Timeline

May 15, 2025	MELSA issues Request for Proposal.
June 13, 2025	Responses are due at 3:00 p.m. CST.
June 20, 2025	Award selection and notification to applicants.
June 23-August 22, 2025	Consultant conducts data gathering, stakeholder engagement, and develops the draft strategic plan.
Sept. 4, 2025	Present draft strategic plan for review and feedback.
Sept.18, 2025	Present the finalized strategic plan to the Board for review.

B. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must include:

- The official name, address, phone number, and email address of the applicant (organization or individual) as well as the name of the principal contact person and the name and title of the person authorized to execute the contract.
- Bios/resumes of key personnel fulfilling the contract, if awarded, including key qualifications and previous similar work experience.
- Three references who can speak to their experience with the consultant in similar projects.
- Examples of similar projects.
- Example(s) of a finished strategic plan developed by the individual assigned to this project.
- A description of the applicant's approach to strategic planning consultation, including methodology, perspective, or philosophy that guides your work.
- A comprehensive work plan that includes:
 - A clear description of the applicant's plan to complete all project components,
 - Identifying, within the process, when participation by the MELSA director, staff,

- and library members is required.
 - A timeline that also indicates check-in or progress points for project status updates,
 - The type of deliverables that will be provided throughout the project and when they will be provided.
- A detailed budget that itemizes all expenses including the consultant's time, materials, travel, and any other expected expenses by project tasks and deliverables.

C. Review of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- The proposed approach to the scope of work
- The proposal adequately details project activities, milestones and deliverables associated with each stage of the scope of work
- The qualifications and experience of the individual(s) identified to fulfill the project
- The individual's/organization's experience with similar projects
- References
- Demonstrated ability to meet deadlines and operate within budget
- Availability for the work to be conducted between June and September, 2025
- The proposal includes detailed costs and the proposed costs are reasonable

D. Questions about this RFP

There will be no pre-response conference. Please submit written requests for additional information or clarification of this RFP to sherry@melsa.org. Please include the name of your organization, a contact person, and telephone number with your emailed request for clarification.

Submission of a signed response to this RFP is certification that your firm is not currently debarred, suspended, declared ineligible or excluded from participation in this transaction by any state or federal department or agency.

E. Response Costs.

MELSA is not responsible for any costs incurred by responders to prepare or submit a response to this RFP, participate in demonstrations or for any other cost associated with responding to the RFP.

F. Ownership of Responses.

All responses timely submitted become the property of MELSA upon submission, and the responses will not be returned. The company submitting the response agrees that MELSA may copy the response for purposes of facilitating the evaluation or to respond to requests for public data. The company, by submitting a response, consents to such copying and warrants that such copying will not violate the rights of any third party, including copyrights.

G. Public Records and Requests for Confidentiality.

- a. Pursuant to Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. § 13.591, the names of all entities that submitted a timely response to MELSA will be public once the responses have been opened. All other information contained in the responses remains private until MELSA has completed negotiating a contract with the selected contractor. After a contract has been negotiated, all information in all of the responses is public, except “trade secret” information as defined at Minn. Stat. § 13.37.

Requests for release of information held by MELSA are subject to the provisions of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. Ch. 13. Contractors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with these provisions before submitting a response.

All information submitted by a contractor eventually will be treated as public information by MELSA unless the contractor properly requests, and MELSA agrees, that information can be treated as private or confidential. A contractor making such a request must include the name, address and telephone number of the individual authorized by the contractor to answer inquiries by MELSA concerning the request. MELSA reserves the right to make the final determination of whether the data identified in such a request is private or confidential within the meaning of the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. A contractor’s failure to request private or confidential treatment of information pursuant to this Section will be deemed by MELSA as a waiver by the contractor of any private or confidential treatment of information included in the response.

- b. MELSA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses, to waive any defects or to advertise for new responses where the acceptance, rejections, waiving or advertising of such would be in the best interests of MELSA. MELSA reserves the right to negotiate with one or more Contractors responding to this RFP.
- c. MELSA may make such investigations as it deems necessary to determine the ability of the responder to furnish the equipment and services outlined herein, and the responder shall furnish to MELSA all such information and data for this purpose as MELSA may request. MELSA reserves the right to reject any response if the evidence submitted by, or investigation, of such responder fails to satisfy MELSA that such responder is properly qualified to carry out the obligations of the contract.

- d. Responses received prior to the due date and time will be kept secured. No response received after the due date and time will be considered.
- e. MELSA will not physically release or return to the responder any response for purpose of modification, withdrawal, or any other purpose.
- f. Response Guarantee: By submitting a response to MELSA, contractor agrees to guarantee its response for 90 days from the date the responses are due.
- g. Responders may also be requested to submit additional information concerning their firm prior to award.
- h. There is no appeal process for this request.
- i. MELSA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses in the best interests of MELSA.
- j. Responses received after the due date and time will not be considered.
- k. MELSA reserves the right to negotiate with one or more contractors responding to this RFP.

III. RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS

- A. All response should be emailed to sherry@melsa.org with subject line **RFP Response: MELSA Strategic Plan.**

The response deadline is 3:00 p.m. CST on Friday, June 13, 2025.

- B. All contractors must submit ONE (1) complete electronic copy of their response.

- C. General Instructions

- a. All responses by corporations shall bear the official seal of the corporation, if applicable, along with the signature of a duly authorized officer of the corporation.
- b. No erasures allowed on the Response.

- D. Complete Response Checklist:

The items outlined below are required for a complete response.

- a. A narrative letter, describing your firm and the services you are able to provide.
- b. Full proposal detailing all of the requirements listed in this document.
- c. Completed Response Form, Non-collusion statement, and Tennessee Notice, Attachments A, B, and C.

ATTACHMENT A: RESPONSE FORM

Vendor Information

Contractor name:

Address:

Web site URL:

Contact name:

Phone number:

Fax:

Email:

I certify that the information provided to MELSA in this response is accurate and will remain valid for ninety (90) days from the quote due date.

Authorized Signature

Name (please print or type)

Title

Date

ATTACHMENT B: NON-COLLUSION STATEMENT

Please print or type (in ink)

COMPANY NAME: _____ FEDERAL TAX ID NUMBER: _____

Company Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Contact Person: _____ Title: _____

Phone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____ email: _____

In signing this Response, we certify that we have not, either directly or indirectly, entered into any agreement or participated in any collusion or otherwise taken any action in restraint of the competition; that no attempt has been made to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a Response; that this Response has been independently arrived at without collusion with any other Contractor, competitor or potential competitor, that this Response has not been knowingly disclosed prior to the opening of the Responses to any Contractor competitor; that the above statement is accurate under penalty or perjury.

This company will comply with all terms, conditions, specifications required by the Contractor in this Request for Information and all terms of our RFI response.

_____ Authorized Signature	_____ Title	_____ Date
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Submit this form as part of the RFI Response.

ATTACHMENT C: TENNESSEN NOTICE

Data Privacy: Acknowledgment

In accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Minn. Stat. § 13.04 and § 13.591, Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) is required to inform you of your rights as they pertain to private or non-public information collected from you. "Private or non-public data" is information that is available to you, but not to the public.

NEED FOR INFORMATION: The information we collect or have collected from you or from other sources authorized by you is needed for evaluation of bids or responses received by Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) for labor and materials to determine the lowest responsive and responsible contractor to perform the planned work.

REFUSAL: You are not legally required to supply the requested data by MELSA. You have the right to refuse to supply the information we request; however, without this information, we may be unable to properly evaluate your bid or response and may not be able to award you the contract to perform the planned work.

ACCESS TO DATA: Private or non-public information we collect from you may be shared, as a matter of program or service necessity, with another jurisdiction providing funding or a consultant hired by Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA) to prepare the plans, oversee and pay for the work.

Before MELSA has completed its selection or evaluation process, information will not be given to any other agency or individual without your written consent unless specifically authorized by state or federal law, or under a valid court order. Unless otherwise authorized by law, government agencies with whom we share private or confidential information must also treat the information they receive as private or confidential. You, as the subject of collected data, unless otherwise specified by law or court order, may view the information we have concerning you and may make written comments as to the accuracy of the information. Copies of information we have concerning your bid or response may be made, for a reasonable fee, upon your request.

After MELSA has completed its selection or evaluation process, information that is not trade secret data will become public, as provided by Minn. Stat. § 13.591, subd. 3.

RETENTION: All information on you will be kept until federal, state and/or county retention requirements have been met, at which time the information will be destroyed. Unless otherwise noted, this consent will only be effective for a period of one (1) year from the date of signature.

IN ACCORDANCE WITH MINNESOTA STATUTES, SECTION 13.04, I HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF AND UNDERSTAND MY RIGHTS AS SUBJECT OF DATA.

Name of Organization

By:_____

Date

PRINT NAME AND TITLE_____