

RE-ENVISIONING BRANCH LIBRARIES

Request for Qualifications for Participants in Design Study

Deadline: June 20, 2014, 11:59 p.m. EST



T H E A R C H I
T E C T U R A L
L E A G U E N Y

ANSWERS TO FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I. BACKGROUND MATERIALS AND DELIVERABLES

1. Will there be an actual site / building provided to the six teams selected to work on this design study?

The selected design teams will be provided with a list of design challenges. We have developed these challenges to provoke design responses applicable to multiple branch libraries across the five boroughs. Site information about specific branches will be included as reference points for each design challenge. Some teams may choose to work on one or two specific sites, while others might take a more systemic approach. The Architectural League / Center for an Urban Future project team will encourage a range of strategies among the six teams.

2. What information on branch libraries will be made available to participating teams?

Information provided will include CUF's two reports. The [first report](#) documents the expansion of services that branch libraries provide. The second report (forthcoming) details the physical plant, including the nature and extent of capital needs identified by each library system.

For many of the 211 branches, information provided will include, but is not limited to, total square footage, how much of the interior area is publicly accessible, program attendance, circulation statistics, state of good repair, dates of construction and renovation, etc.

Additionally, we will provide a list of suggested reading that illuminates different aspects of libraries' role in New York neighborhoods, the history of their architectural forms, the evolution of their symbolic function, and the experience of a variety of contemporary library users.

Throughout the process, the project team will facilitate both structured and unstructured consultation with current staff at the three library systems as well as library experts from around the country.

3. Will the project generate ideas from all of the teams or choose one finalist from among the six teams? Will the best proposal win a contract to work on a project?

The goal of the design study is to generate a range of design strategies that will encourage strategic thinking among policymakers about how to support, modernize, optimize, and invest in branch libraries and the services they provide.

The work of each design team will be presented. Once the teams are selected and the design study has been launched, the process will not be competitive.

There are no plans for a specific architecture project to follow the design study.

II. TEAM COMPOSITION

4. Can teams include members who are not architects or designers?

Yes. Diversity of disciplines and professional experience is recommended. We expect teams may include architects and designers from within particular firms as well as internal or external collaborators drawn from other fields.

5. Are teams expected to include individuals from outside the office with expertise in information sciences, real estate, and finance?

We encourage applications from interdisciplinary teams. We do not assume that interdisciplinary expertise will be drawn exclusively from within a particular design firm, nor do we assume that it must necessarily include external collaborators.

We want the six teams to represent a diversity of strengths. Some of the chosen teams might be more focused on real estate and finance, others on urban design, service design, landscape design, or interior design, etc. We do not expect teams to include members from every discipline mentioned in the RFQ.

The diversity of expertise represented on each team is among the selection criteria, but it is one of many factors that will influence the selection.

6. Can the same consultant join multiple applicant teams?

No. We hope that the selected teams will share resources and offer each other feedback. But we discourage any overlap of team members.

7. I am not an architect or designer, but I have relevant experience. Is it possible to join a team?

We do not require that team leaders be licensed architects, though each team must include members with considerable experience in professional architectural practice.

Interested parties are encouraged to form teams on their own, composed of collaborators with whom they have a good working relationship.

Design teams that would be open to the collaboration of an individual non-designer with relevant experience should contact us directly to explore options.

8. I don't live in New York City, am I eligible to apply?

Residence in New York City is not required, but regular communication (including some in-person meetings) with the project team and commitment to presenting publicly at the event in November are required of all participants. Travel costs will not be covered.

III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

9. Can past work submitted be from different team members?

Yes. Please ensure that each example of past work clearly identifies whose work it is.

10. Which team members should submit a bio and which should submit a resume?

Material submitted should include a bio (100 words) and CV (one-page) for *each key team member*.

11. Is there a page limit for submissions?

The statement of interest and experience is limited to 500 words.

The bio for each key team member is limited to 100 words. The resume of each key team member is limited to one page.

Examples of past work are limited to three pages.

IV. SCHEDULE

12. When is the anticipated start date? Are any other dates already scheduled?

The selected teams will be notified by July 1st. We will schedule a kick-off meeting shortly thereafter. Subsequent, additional meetings to be scheduled will include information sharing sessions with library staff and experts as well as working sessions at which the project team will offer feedback to each design team.

The public presentation of design study results will take place in early November. The date is not yet confirmed. Attendance is required.