Request for Information

For: New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission Independent Review

Event	Date	Time
Question Submission Deadline	**Monday, April 8, 2024**	2:00 p.m.
Request for Information Submission Due Date	**Friday, June 7, 2024**	12:00 p.m.

Dates are subject to change. All times contained in the Request for Information refer to Eastern Time.

Request for Information Issued By:
State of New Jersey
Cannabis Regulatory Commission

Date: March 19, 2024

1. Purpose and Intent

This Request for Information (RFI) is issued by the Cannabis Regulatory Commission (NJ-CRC or Commission). The purpose of this RFI is to gather information to allow the Commission to comply with N.J.S.A. 24:6I-24.

The intent of this RFI is to gain insight into the needs and estimated costs for a public research university to conduct an independent study of the Commission and its activities. This RFI also seeks input regarding potential inclusion of other assessments not prescribed in statute.

For purposes of this RFI, the term "Respondent" or "University" refers to the entity responding to this RFI. Respondents must be a public research university as defined by N.J.S.A. 18A:3B-3 in order to be eligible for consideration.

N.J.S.A. 24:6I-24(f) requires the Commission to contract with a public research university to conduct an independent study of the Commission and its activities. The study shall include a review of:

- the NJ-CRC's organization;
- the NJ-CRC's regulation and enforcement activities;
- the overall effectiveness of the NJ-CRC as a full-time entity; and
- whether the regulation and oversight of medical cannabis or personal use cannabis could be more effectively and efficiently managed through a reorganization of the NJ-CRC, consolidation of the NJ-CRC within the Department of Health or another Executive Branch department, conversion to a part-time Commission, or the transfer of some or all of the NJ-CRC's operations elsewhere within the Executive Branch.

Responses to this RFI may be used to issue a memorandum of agreement (MOA) with a Respondent that the Commission determines is best suited to conduct the study in light of cost, qualification in accordance with procurement laws and regulations, anticipated quality and reliability of the study, and other factors the Commission deems appropriate. Information submitted by any Respondent is provided voluntarily and with the understanding that a memorandum of agreement may or may not be issued as a result of, and subsequent to, this RFI.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 24:6I-24(f), the findings of the independent study will be made public and submitted to the Governor and the Legislature, along with the Commission's recommendations for any appropriate executive, administrative, or legislative action.

The Commission reserves the right to contact Respondents for additional information at its sole discretion.

2. Request for Information (RFI) Submission

Responses to the Commission's RFI should be submitted electronically via email to CRC.Info@crc.nj.gov no later than Friday, June 7, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Responses should not exceed 25 pages, not including appendices or exhibits required pursuant to Section 5.4. Responses must be typed in Times New Roman font and no smaller than 11-point size.

3. Electronic Question and Answer Period

The Commission will electronically accept questions and inquiries from all potential Respondents. Questions or inquiries should be submitted electronically via email to CRC.Info@crc.nj.gov no later than Monday, April 8, 2024, at 2:00 p.m.

Questions should be directly tied to the RFI and asked in consecutive order, from beginning to end, following the organization of the RFI.

Each question should begin by referencing the RFI section number to which it relates.

In the event that questions are posed by potential Respondents, answers to such questions will be issued by RFI Amendment. RFI Amendments, if any, will be disseminated in the same manner as this RFI.

4. Contents of RFI Submissions as Public Records

Responses to this RFI can be released to the public consistent with N.J.A.C. 17:12-1.2(b) and (c), or under the New Jersey Open Public Records Act (OPRA), N.J.S.A. 47:1A-1.1 et seq., or the common law right of access. All information submitted to the Commission in response to this RFI is considered public information notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary submitted by a Respondent. Proprietary information may be exempt from public disclosure by OPRA or common law. However, the Commission may request that the Respondent agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Commission from any and all damages, claims, and costs incurred in connection with an attempt to exempt the Respondent's RFI responses from public disclosure. The Commission shall have the final authority to determine whether the materials are exempt from public disclosure under OPRA and shall take action as required by applicable law.

The Commission will not honor any attempt by a Respondent to designate its entire response as proprietary or confidential or to claim copyright protection for its entire response. Copyright law does not prohibit access to a record which is otherwise available under OPRA. In the event of any challenge to the Respondent's assertion of confidentiality with which the Commission does not concur, the Respondent shall be responsible for defending its designation, and, in doing so, all costs and expenses associated therewith shall be the responsibility of the Respondent. The Commission assumes no such responsibility or liability.

5. Areas of Inquiry

Responses to this RFI must contain responses to each area of inquiry provided below. To avoid the appearance of bias, prejudice, or improper influence, responses must not include the Respondent's conclusion, recommendation, or advice on any of the required components of the study listed in Section 1 (Purpose and Intent).

5.1 Respondent's Background Information

A. Respondent's name;
B. Respondent's address;
C. Respondent's point of contact for this RFI response including name, title, phone number, and email address;
D. Aspects of the University that makes the Respondent qualified and capable of conducting the study;
E. List of key personnel to be assigned to each role or position required for conducting the study;
F. Identify any federal, state, or local government contracts held by the Respondent that may be impacted, whether positively or negatively, by the University's involvement in conducting the independent study; and
G. Identify any contracts, agreements, or engagements for services to which the Respondent is a party that involves a cannabis business licensed or permitted by the government of any jurisdiction.

5.2 Pricing

A. Respondent's anticipated costs for conducting the study, including an explanation of the Respondent's pricing model; and
B. A detailed budget supporting the Respondent's anticipated total cost for conducting the study, including an explanation of any key pricing variables that would impact the quality or reliability of the study. In addition, the Respondent must provide the titles of proposed personnel to work on the project and a breakdown of the estimated hours for each person and all overhead/operational costs expected to be billed.

5.3 Experience and Proposed Study Approach

A. A summary of the Respondent's experience conducting similar studies;
B. A detailed description of the Respondent's anticipated study design, including the metrics or key performance indicators to be assessed and the anticipated time needed for the Respondent to complete the study; and
C. A list of information that would be needed from the Commission in order for the Respondent to complete the study.

5.4 Appendices Required

A. Resumes or curriculum vitae of each key personnel identified in response to 5.1(E), along with a cover sheet for this appendix indicating whether each person has any relationships – financial, personal, professional, or otherwise – with any NJ-CRC

Board member or staff member, or with any cannabis business licensed or permitted by the government of any jurisdiction;

B. A copy of any reports the Respondent has authored as part of a similar independent study;
C. Any other relevant or pertinent information related to the Respondent's interest in conducting the independent study; and
D. A list of any and all of the Respondent's board members, including members of any governing or advisory body or otherwise; and indicate whether each person has any relationships – financial, personal, professional, or otherwise – with any NJ-CRC Board member or staff member, or with any cannabis business licensed or permitted by the government of any jurisdiction.