



New Jersey Department of Transportation
Bureau of Research
RESEARCH PROJECT
Request for Proposal
2023 – 2024 SPR Program

Project Title: Best Practices in Transit Customer Satisfaction Surveys
Posting No.: 2023-04
Date of RFP Announcement: 06/2/2023
Closing Date: 07/12/2023

NOTE: Due to P.L. 2019, c. 196, the New Jersey Department of Transportation cannot award research grants to PRIVATE and/or OUT OF STATE institutes of higher education.

Proposals must be prepared in accordance with NJDOT's *Supplemental and Proposals guidelines*. Please visit <https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/research/guidelines.shtml> for the most current version.

All proposals must also have a corresponding online PreAward Risk Assessment form completed and submitted by the Principal Investigator (PIs) prior to the RFP closing date and time. This online form can be found at:

https://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/research/risk_assessment_forms.shtml

1 - RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVES

1.1 Problem Statement

Through this project, NJ TRANSIT seeks to learn about the best practices and lessons learned in transit customer satisfaction surveys. NJ TRANSIT currently conducts their customer satisfaction survey via an online survey twice a year. The survey methodology has remained essentially the same since 2011. NJ TRANSIT would like to learn more about new data analysis tools, data visualization tools, survey methodologies, weighting approaches etc. that could be used to enhance or improve their customer satisfaction survey process.

1.2 Research Objectives

To identify best practices in transit customer satisfaction surveys to accurately capture the voice of the customer and identify actionable results.

At a minimum, the proposed research shall include:

Phase 1: Conduct a comprehensive literature review of best practices in transit customer satisfaction surveys and other related industries, like the airline industry, that accurately capture the voice of the customer and identify actionable results. The review shall include an in-depth examination of all aspects of customer satisfaction survey including newer tools and methodologies like transactional surveys and how to collect and incorporate that data with other customer satisfaction/voice of the customer data.

Phase 2: Develop interview questions about best practices and lessons learned in customer satisfaction surveys conducted by other transit agencies. Develop a list of at least 10 transit agencies to be contacted. The list should include a variety of transit agencies including some similar in size to NJ TRANSIT, agencies that operate modes of transit similar to NJT (bus, rail, light rail and



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paratransit), etc. The transit agencies should primarily be from the United States with a limited number in other countries. Both the interview guide and list of transit agencies to be interviewed, shall be approved by the customer prior to moving on to phase 3.

Phase 3: Conduct in-depth interviews with key staff at other transit agencies (minimum of 10 different agencies) to identify the best practices and lessons learned in all aspects of customer satisfaction surveys. Provide a technical memorandum documenting the findings gathered from the interviews.

Phase 4: Provide customer satisfaction survey recommendations, based on the research conducted in the prior phases, regarding:

- Frequency (how often conducted)
- Length (time to complete)
- Distribution and sampling method(s)
- Email invites
- In person surveying
- Use of incentives
- Surveys accessible to persons with disabilities
- Surveys accessible to customers with low English proficiency or those that are non-English speaking
- Survey design, flow, and question order
- Customer satisfaction questions and rating scales
- Data cleaning techniques
- Data weighting techniques (potentially using recent Census products and data)
- Data analysis methods and tools
- Text analysis tools
- Interactive results dashboards
- Visual presentations of the findings
- How the findings are shared internally with in an agency and externally to customers
- How findings result in changes or improvements

1.3 Type of Contract

It is proposed that if the Issuing Office enters into a contract because of this Request for Proposal (RFP), it will be a **Cost Reimbursement, Deliverable-Based** contract containing the Standard Contract Terms and Conditions.



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2 - BUDGET and CONTRACT TIME

The **TOTAL** project budget shall not exceed **\$300,000 US Dollars**. Budgets will be evaluated separately, and only after a selection has been made as to which proposal is the most qualified based on technical merit.

The PI must provide the anticipated research study duration based on the proposed tasks. Consideration should be given to potential impediments so that adjustments are incorporated into the schedule minimizing the need for time extensions. Contract time shall include sufficient time for the procurement of subcontractors, as well as no less than three months for Final Report review and acceptance. Please be advised that going forward, new task orders having permissible justification will be allowed no more than a one-time extension with the advent of 2 CFR 200.

A 18-month total project duration is preferred.

Please provide a Gantt Chart schedule, by month number (e.g., 1-24), showing tasks start/end, and deliverables. List corresponding deliverables below the chart.

3 - Oral Presentations

Oral online presentations may be requested as part of this RFP. If required, you will be notified by the Bureau of Research to schedule your oral presentation. They will be held at NJDOT headquarters in Trenton, NJ, attended by the Technical Advisory Panel (TAP), and be limited to no more than an hour, including time for questions and answers.

4 – Deadline

Proposals (no hard copies required) are due at the NJDOT Bureau of Research no later than **4:00 p.m. on July 12, 2023**. Electronic proposal documents (preferred pdf) shall be emailed to DOT-Research.Proposals@dot.nj.gov with the subject: **RFP-2023-04 University – PI's name**.

Approximate Start Date: 09/29/2023. The official start date is the date that the Bureau of Research obtains a signature from the Assistant Commissioner.

5 – CONTACTS

Interested parties shall send all questions related to this RFP to the Research Bureau Manager by sending an e-mail to Amanda.Gendek@dot.nj.gov or by phone (609-963-2242). Questions on this topic **shall not** be directed to any Research Project Manager, Research Customer, or any other NJDOT person. All questions must be received **on or before 06/12/2023 in order to be answered**.



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PROPOSAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:

Electronic proposal documents (preferred pdf) shall be emailed to DOT-Research.Proposals@dot.nj.gov with the subject: **RFP-2023-04 University – PI's name**. A confirmation of receipt will be sent via email.