

Q&A ABOUT THE 2024 DESIGN EXCELLENCE APPLICATION PROCESS

1. **Question:** Are firms that were previously chosen for and completed projects through the Design Excellence Program eligible to submit in this new cycle? **Answer: Yes.**
2. **Question:** The RFQ requires a reference letter from two former or current clients. Do these reference letters need to be on official letterhead from the clients? **Answer: It is up to each firm to decide how to best display reference letters.**
3. **Question:** Based on how the submissions will be viewed, is there a preferred page size and format (landscape vs. portrait)? **Answer: 8.5x11" is preferred but not required.**
4. **Question:** Does the Design Excellence Program foresee a focus on any particular project types during the next cycle? **Answer: Projects that may be funded in the next five years will be diverse in nature and scale. We recommend reviewing projects completed so far for the best idea of the types of projects that may be supported in the future.**
5. **Question:** What types of performance metrics is the committee looking for in the project success statement? **Answer: The Northwest Arkansas Design Excellence Selection Committee is looking to understand how your firm sets goals and evaluates projects. Please reference the metrics you as a firm utilized to measure project success.**
6. **Question:** The RFQ lists a 25-page limit, does this include covers and tabs or dividers? **Answer: No. We value brevity and clarity but will not count covers, tabs or blank pages toward the total limit.**
7. **Question:** Are hourly rates required as part of the submission? **Answer: No**
8. **Question:** Does the Statement of Commitment require hourly dedications for Principals and other team members? **Answer: No.**
9. **Question:** Are full resumes or just bios required for team members? **Answer: Full resumes are not required.**
10. **Question:** Should a subsidiary of a parent company apply separately or in one submission? **We recommend one submission, but ultimately that is up to each firm to decide.**
11. **Question:** Are reference letters included in the 25-page limit? **Answer: Yes.**
12. **Question:** Are any specific formatting requirements aside from the page limit? **Answer: No.**
13. **Question:** Is there a preference to provide one (1) integrated firm submittal or three (3) individual submittals broken out by discipline if we are applying for each discipline (architecture, landscape architecture, urban design & planning)? **Answer: One submittal.**

14. **Question:** Is it possible to provide names of client references with contact information instead of the reference letters? **Letters are preferred but contact information will be accepted in lieu of letters.**
15. **Question:** If our firm was accepted into the program under a certain discipline, are we eligible to supply an updated portfolio for architectural services to be considered for a wider range of opportunities? **Answer: That is not necessary, as all firms in the pool can be considered for a project once it has been selected. That said, we will supply any updated portfolios submitted to the selection committee.**
16. **Question:** If our firm wins a project through the program under one discipline, are we then ineligible for a project under another discipline within the program? **Answer: Yes.**
17. **Question:** Is there a range or limit for the number of reference projects? **Answer: The RFQ asks for two reference letters.**
18. **Question:** Do the five examples of completed projects as lead consultant have to have been completed within a certain time frame? **Answer: No. It is up to each firm's discretion which projects to provide as examples.**
19. **Question:** Does a completed master plan count as a completed project? **Yes.**
20. **Question:** Could you please specify what 'completed project' means for the requested project examples? **Answer: It is up to each firm to decide which projects to provide as examples, but for the purpose of clarification please note that a completed scope of work suffices (rather than constructed project).**
21. **Question:** We have offices dedicated to both landscape architecture and architecture. While they share some partners in leadership, they are 2 separate entities. Should we apply as one company that offers both disciplines or as two separate companies? **Answer: Please apply as one company that offers both disciplines.**
22. **Question:** Must the two (2) provided reference letters relate to the project examples? Or, can the two (2) reference letters relate to other projects? **Answer: The reference letters do not necessarily need to correspond to the project examples.**
23. **Question:** Would you consider a joint application for two sole-proprietor design firms? **Answer: Yes.**
24. **Question:** For new design practices that are under five years old, can work from previous offices be considered as work samples if they've been constructed within the last five years? **Answer: Yes. Please be clear about firm names, timelines and client relationships.**
25. **Question:** Will the package be printed for the jury or will it be reviewed digitally only? **Answer: Most likely they will only be reviewed digitally.**
26. **Question:** Should the submission be organized into 7 sections that address the 7 evaluation criteria or can it be organized differently. **Answer: It can be organized differently.**

27. **Question:** Is there a file size limit for the upload of the Statement of Qualifications? **Answer: No.**
28. **Question:** Do we need to submit any insurance information with our package? **Answer: No.**
29. **Question:** Do we need to provide a copy of MBE certification or is mentioning that we have it sufficient for this purpose? **Answer: Mentioning it is sufficient.**
30. **Question:** Can the PDF contain hyperlinks to additional content? **Yes, although we can provide no guarantees that all the links will be followed.**
31. **Question:** May you please confirm if a booklet spread is considered a page relative to the maximum 25 page requirement? **Answer: Yes, a booklet spread is acceptable. Please note that we value brevity.**
32. **Question:** Is the lead consultant requirement for project examples mandatory for all disciplines (architecture, landscape architecture and urban planning)? **Answer: If the applicants were the lead for the specific and relevant discipline/scope such projects can be listed.**
33. **Question:** Do firms that are interested need to have completed built work in the State of Arkansas? **Answer: No.**
34. **Question:** Do firms that are in the process of applying for corporate licensure in the State of Arkansas qualify to apply? **Answer: Yes. Firms need not have licensure in Arkansas to apply. If selected for a project the firm can begin licensure as required.**
35. **Question:** Do firms that are in the process of securing certification as a WOMO business in their local state qualify to apply? **Answer: Yes. Firms need not have formal certification to apply.**
36. **Question:** Is there an estimated range of construction costs for future projects available to candidates for review? **Answer: Projects that may be funded in the next five years will be diverse in nature and scale. We recommend reviewing projects completed so far for the best idea of the types of projects and associated construction costs that may be supported in the future.**
37. **Question:** Is there a program officer we could speak with to learn more about the program/submission process? **Answer: During the RFQ process we ask that communication be limited to this forum.**
38. **Question:** Are there any known projects that consultants will be selected for at this time? **Answer: No.**
39. **Question:** Is there an established list of sub consultants you prefer to use, or would those be selected by the consultant on a project-by-project basis? **Answer: Sub-consultants will be selected by the consultant on a project-by-project basis.**
40. **Question:** Have there been updates to the studies done by Gehl regarding the Metrics, Methods, and Insights for Applying the Framework since those were released in 2020? Have those Gehl findings been used to measure the success of projects funded following to the completion of those studies? **Answer: No updates to the framework have been made. Yes,**

individual projects completed since 2020 have been evaluated by Gehl. Please contact design@wffmail.com to receive copies of those evaluations.

41. **Question:** Are there examples of how the performance measures have been used to measure success of projects that have been completed through the program? **Projects completed since 2020 have been evaluated by Gehl. Please contact design@wffmail.com to receive copies of those evaluations.**
42. **Question:** With the construction documents for projects being funded through the Walton Family Foundation and the actual construction being funded by the Grantee how has construction administration been handled for previously completed projects? **Answer: Grant funding through the program is administered by grantees who are the clients for each firm. Each grantee will work out how to handle construction administration (CA). Most grantees include CA in their capital construction budget.**