

MEMORANDUM

To: All Interested Vendors

From: Procurement Department, Columbus Metropolitan Library

Date: February 4, 2026

Subject: Addendum No. 2
RFP 26-002– Brand Strategy Development and Implementation

Pre-Proposal Meeting
Questions and Answers

Part 1. Pre-Proposal Meeting: The Columbus Metropolitan Library (“the library” or “CML”) conducted a Pre-Proposal meeting for RFP 26-002 **Brand Strategy Development and Implementation on January 28, 2026, at 3:00 pm.**

The meeting was held virtually on Microsoft Teams. CML staff in attendance:

- Mona Mawalkar, Procurement Manager
- Wendy Tressler, Planning and Strategy Officer
- Wanda Dixon, Procurement Analyst

Representatives from the following companies were in attendance:

- Pamela Georgiana
- Library Market
- Shipyard
- Sift Strategy
- Traiblaze Creative
- Trajectory Brands
- Venn Growth Collective
- Fahlgren Mortine

Part II. Questions and Answers

Q1. What organizational needs, challenges, or opportunities is the rebrand intended to address at this moment?

A1. Our current brand no longer fully reflects the breadth of our audience or the range of services we provide. With a new CEO and the rollout of a new strategic plan, both of which present an opportunity to refresh and realign our brand to better support our direction and growth.

Q2. Has a budget range been allocated for this work?

A2. No budget has been established yet.

Q3. Given the alignment between the strategic plan and this brand development, how does the organization envision coordinating and sharing information between the strategic planning team and the rebranding team to ensure alignment throughout the processes?

A3. The library's Planning & Strategy Officer is responsible for the rebranding team and leads strategic planning. All information gathered during the strategic planning process will be shared.

Q4. The RFP states the goal is to release the brand in line with the strategic plan in May or June. It has been our experience that aligning brand development closely with strategic planning often strengthens outcomes. Is CML open to discussing an alternative timeline for the brand launch to ensure the strategic planning process outcomes appropriately inform the rebrand?

A4. Yes, the library is open to discussing an alternate timeline.

Q5. Who are the primary audiences that should be considered for brand strategy development and rollout?

A5. Internally, the team will be comprised of our Executive Leadership Team (ELT), Directors, Marketing & Communications team, Development team, Government Relations team, and Public Services staff. Externally, it will include CML's entire service area.

Q6. Describe the CML project team that will work on this project.

A6. A team comprising our ELT, Directors, and staff from the following departments: Marketing & Communications, Development, Government Relations, and Public Services.

Q7. Describe the approval process and who is involved in each phase of work, as well as approving creative concepts.

A7. The Planning & Strategy Officer, in consultation with the CEO, will have final approval, but input will be sought from the cross-departmental team.

Q8. What additional market or category research will be available to the selected agency?

A8. All available resources and information will be provided to the selected firm. For anything not immediately available, we are open to discussing options for obtaining it. This is the most specific guidance we can offer at this time. We have robust customer usage data, including insights from Savannah by OrangeBoy and from customer surveys.

Q9. Website homepage design is requested as a potential deliverable. Does the CML team have development experience to apply the brand to <https://www.columbuslibrary.org/>, or will there be a need for the selected partner to aid the CML in their application of the final brand to the current site?

A9. Our team can handle applying the final brand to the current website.

Q10. Do you currently work with a brand strategy or design agency in any capacity right now? Is there an incumbent?

A10. We conducted a brand refresh approximately four years ago, and that contract was awarded to Ologie. Venn recently conducted an internal marketing audit. The rest of what we outsource to vendors is production of videos, print pieces, etc.

Q11. What level of depth is expected in the brand toolkit and internal training? Are you looking for in-person training, or what does that look like?

A11. The training can be in person or virtual. The training would be limited to our marketing team.

Q12. When is the first draft of the strategic plan due?

A12. We expect to have the first draft of the strategic plan in March. The draft will be shared with the library's board in April.

Q13. It was mentioned that minority participation is encouraged. Are there any preference points or is that taken into consideration in the evaluation criteria at all?

A13. Please refer to the Selection Process section of the RFP and Appendix D – Evaluation Matrix. Minority Participation is not included in the evaluation matrix.

Q14. Beyond the initial 4-8 creative concepts, how many rounds of revisions or feedback cycles should be anticipated for brand identity and messaging components?

A14. We anticipate approximately two to three rounds of revisions or feedback cycles, though this can be discussed and refined as needed.

Q15. Are there specific strategic tensions or debates emerging in the Strategic Plan discussions that you see the brand needing to help resolve?

A15. No.

Q16. Are there high-visibility moments or milestones tied to the Strategic Plan launch where brand adoption will be especially critical?

A16. The schedule has not yet been finalized. We welcome any recommendations and encourage firms to include suggested milestones or high-visibility moments in their proposal. CML will collaborate with the selected firm and refine these options.

Q17. What does success look like internally - six months after launch and one year after launch?

A17. Success would be reflected in a flexible, well-defined brand that is consistently understood and implemented by staff as intended.

Q18. Are there specific audiences where there is a significant opportunity for growth? Are there audiences where the current brand is underperforming or misunderstood (e.g., younger adults, non-users, multilingual communities, civic stakeholders)?

A18. Yes. Non-users are the primary opportunity, along with adults without children and community leaders, where the brand may be underperforming or less well understood.

Q19. Do we need to include a W-9 and a certificate of insurance with our proposal, or only if we are awarded the contract?

A19. Only the firm awarded the contract will need to submit a W-9 and a certificate of insurance.

Q20. As part of the strategic planning process, has there been significant engagement, community consultation, and research that we can draw on to develop the brand strategy, or are you expecting the proposals to include these?

A20. Yes. We have already completed substantial engagement and research that can inform the brand strategy. This includes a robust strategic planning process with a community-wide survey, one-on-one conversations with key stakeholders, input gathered through community breakfasts, staff day, and the Book Festival and a significant volume of data ready for analysis. In addition, a 2025 engagement effort related to a new building project produced further insights. All of this data will be made available to the selected firm.

Q21. Is the intention to layer on additional engagement and leverage, and build on that?

A21. Yes. As you review what we've shared, if you see opportunities to build on it or recommend more targeted engagement in specific areas, we're open to that.

Q22. On page 4, you mentioned up to three sample brand applications. When we are doing these sorts of projects, there could be 75 different items branded under the old branding that we need to create new templates for and materials for you to use moving forward. This refers to just three samples. Our clients have staff who can create the collateral. Are you looking to have us create collateral for you? Do you have a team that anticipates doing that? What is your collateral strategy?

A22. We have an in-house team of eight. Within this scope, we are seeking a limited number of sample brand applications rather than a comprehensive collateral overhaul. A broader collateral review and template development would either be handled internally or addressed separately outside of this RFP.

Q23. Are you interested in brand books to standardize verbiage within your organization?

A23. Yes, we are interested in a brand book/toolkit that includes all core elements and is flexible enough for our marketing team to use and carry forward.

Q24. Are you open to us reordering the responses?

A24. Yes, you may reorder the responses, as long as it's clear how each section aligns with the scope of work and covers all items required as part of the RFP submission process.

Q25. Should experience and why we might be a good fit, and examples of work, be in an appendix, or are you open to that being in the body of the response?

A25. We're open to either approach. You may include experience, fit, and examples of your work in the body of the proposal or as an appendix. How you choose to integrate examples of your approach, brand strategy, and creative work is up to each firm.

Q26. Based on where you are in the process now, would we, as we're working through this, have input into how that keeps moving along, or would we take what you're coming up with and use it to help build the brand strategy and visual design?

A26. At this stage, you would primarily follow the strategic plan and use those decisions as the foundation for the brand strategy.

Q27. Is there any reason why you would not consider a firm in Canada?

A27. We are open to proposals from Canadian firms.

Q28. Can you give an example of how the old or existing brand has been inflexible for your team and created roadblocks?

A28. Our existing brand uses many graphical shapes that were very trendy when it was selected. It tends to lean a bit youthful. The original brand Ologie created was a bit more sophisticated, but applying it to the whole scale has been a challenge.

Q29. Are you set on a master-sub-brand architecture where CML is the master brand and Friends is the sub-brand?

A29. Yes, that is the likely approach, but we are open to discussing. We anticipate focusing on a small number of core areas, including Young Minds, the Summer Reading Challenge, the Book Festival, the Foundation, and Friends.

Q30. How many people do you anticipate being on your project team for this process?

A30. The project team size will probably be 5 to 10. We can discuss the optimal team composition with the selected firm

Q31. How well would you say that CML collectively knows who you are as an organization?

A31. We have a clear sense of who we are and where we're headed. The input we've received to date has helped confirm and strengthen that direction.

All Proposals must be received no later than 12:00 Noon on February 11, 2026.

**PROPOSERS ARE REQUIRED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF THIS
MEMORANDUM (ADDENDUM NO. 2) ON THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ADDENDA
FORM IN THE RFP DOCUMENTS**