



Request for Proposal
2023 Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Survey

Population Health and Research
Center for Science Technology and Innovation

10/17/2022

I. Overview

The Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC) is the local public health department for the City of Boston. BPHC’s mission is to protect, preserve, and promote the health and well-being of all Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable.

BPHC seeks a vendor to conduct data collection for the 2023 Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BBRFSS). The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is a nation-wide surveillance project originating from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It is conducted in each state by the CDC in partnership with the state health departments. The Boston BRFSS is conducted independently of the CDC but follows the national BRFSS protocols.

As part of BPHC’s efforts to have an equitable procurement process, BPHC will consider and encourage unrepresentative businesses that includes; Minority-owned Business Enterprises (MBE), Women-owned Business Enterprises (WBE), Veteran-owned Business Enterprises (VBE), Disability-owned Business Enterprise (DOBE), Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Business Enterprises (LGBTBE), Minority Non Profit(MNPO), Women Non Profit(WNPO), Minority Women Non Profit(MWNPO) and local businesses to apply to this RFP.

II. RFP Timeline

October 17, 2022	Posted on Boston Globe
October 17, 2022	Posted on BPHC.org by 10:00 AM EST
October 24, 2022	Questions due in writing by 5:00 PM <u>EST</u> to: research@bphc.org Subject – 2023 BBRFSS RFP Applicant Questions
October 31, 2022	Responses to questions available for viewing on www.bphc.org/RFP by 5:00 PM EST
November 14, 2022	Proposal due via email by 5:00 PM EST: Subject – 2023 BBRFSS RFP Proposal Email: Procurement@bphc.org NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS DEADLINE
December 12, 2022	Notification of Decision: Desired date to award. BPHC has the discretion to extend this time period without notice to the proposers. All proposals shall remain valid and open for a period of one hundred twenty (120) days from the proposal submission date, unless a proposer notifies BPHC of its withdrawal.

III. Scope of Work

The BPHC is seeking a vendor to conduct on-going monthly BBRFSS data collection among Boston residents for a 12-month period beginning in January 2023. The survey instrument will be provided by the BPHC Research & Evaluation Office and will average 26-27 minutes in interview length. The final survey instrument will be similar to the sample survey instrument provided in this RFP. We anticipate that the final 2023 survey instrument will differ from the attached 2021 survey instrument by approximately 20 question changes (20 deletions and replacements).

Survey Methodology and Screening

BPHC requires data collection to follow a random-digit-dial (RDD) method utilizing a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI) system. All Boston households with landline telephones are to be included in a landline frame in order to achieve a representative sample of non-institutionalized adults ages 18 and older in Boston who reside in private domiciles. In addition, a substantial portion of interviews will be collected in a cell phone frame of non-institutionalized Boston resident adults ages 18 and older who use a cellphone. As per CDC-BRFSS protocol, the proposed sampling plan will utilize a disproportionate stratified random sampling (DSS) method in which high density stratum will be sampled at a higher rate than the medium density stratum to increase the efficiency of the data collection process. The proposed landline frame and cell phone frame sampling plans should be described in detail and consistent with CDC-BRFSS protocols and may include strategy adjustment to improve Boston resident response rates while maintaining proportional geographical representation (please see Small Area Sampling section below).

We would like cost estimates for seven landline/cell-phone combination options. These are overlapping dual frames in which some percentage of interviews are collected within the landline phone frame, and the remainder are collected within the cell-phone frame. In this mix, the cell-phone users are not necessarily cellphone only users. Please see the cost estimate tables for more information on the proportion of landline and cellphone in the sample options.

Survey methodology should be conducted according to standard BRFSS survey methods outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, with exceptions noted here. The survey partial complete point, the point after which partially completed interviews will be accepted toward the final sample size count, will fall at a minimum 75% completion of the survey instrument. Partials may constitute a maximum of 5% of the sample total for each of the two frames. Additionally, two residency screener questions are to be included in the respondent selection process; these are city/town of residence and zip code of residence (Boston zip codes for purposes of this survey include and are limited to: 02108, 02109, 02110, 02111, 02113, 02114, 02115, 02116, 02118, 02119, 02120, 02121, 02122, 02124, 02125, 02126, 02127, 02128, 02129, 02130, 02131, 02132, 02134, 02135, 02136, 02199, 02210, 02215, 02163, and 02467.)

Respondents who do not reside in Boston (i.e., do not meet the residency screener questions) will not be eligible for participation. The acquisition of the landline and cell-phone sampling frames is the responsibility of the applicant and should be included in the proposal.

Responses to this RFP should clearly outline their understanding of the appropriate survey methodology, and further should specify methodology assumptions, such as net incidence and coverage, response rate.

Small Area Sampling

Previous iterations of the Boston BRFSS have utilized cell phone sampling methods that are more commonly applied for efficient sampling in small area research (county and city level). This included a cell sample design based on telephone exchanges that have their rate centers (the midpoint of the rate area) in the vicinity of the Boston area. The location of the rate center was used as a rough indicator for the location of survey respondents. To determine the rate centers, previous vendors have created a map of the study area and overlaid the location of the local cellular rate centers. The rate centers were then stratified into high density and medium density based on the percentage of respondents who reported that they lived in Boston based on previous Boston BRFSS data.

To further improve identification of eligible respondents, a zip code matching process was used in which cell phone samples were obtained with the zip code of the billing address appended. This resulted in three groups: those with a zip code matching the Boston area, those non-matching to Boston, and those without zip code data. All three groups were sampled to ensure representation of the Boston population. The zip code matching and those without zip code data were sampled at higher rates than the non-matching group.

These methods are a departure from standard CDC BRFSS protocol designed specifically for larger geographies (i.e., states). Applicants should indicate their understanding and experience with cell phone sampling in geographically small areas.

Asian Respondent Oversample

In order to achieve a survey sample which is more representative of Boston's Asian community, the BPHC conducts an oversample in specific zip codes. In past surveying, a 2:1 oversample of respondents in five specific zip codes (02111, 02115, 02134, 02135, and 02215) that were identified as "high" Asian population was conducted. A similar oversample is planned for the 2023 Boston BRFSS. Applicants should describe their approach in achieving an Asian oversample.

Languages

BPHC desires that the survey be readily conducted in both English and Spanish according to the linguistic needs of each individual respondent, with the dialect tailored to best reflect that spoken by Boston's Spanish-speaking community. The selected applicant will prepare the Spanish-translation of the survey instrument. BPHC would require an opportunity to review this translation for accuracy and cultural appropriateness prior to CATI programming and fielding.

Please include details on your organization's capacity to complete interviews among Spanish-speaking Boston residents and your protocol for identifying then completing interviews among Spanish-speaking respondents.

Additionally, BPHC would like to receive add-on pricing for interviewing in each of the following languages (pricing by language individually): Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Cape Verdean Creole. Please include details on your organization's capacity to complete interviews among Boston residents speaking any of these languages and your protocol for identifying and then completing interviews.

Interviewer Training and Quality Assurance

Applicants are expected to include an interviewer training process for the 2023 Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, including mock-interview procedures, exercises on pronunciation of medical

conditions, exercises on gaining cooperation of interviewees, and preparation to respond to interviewee questions. Sensitivity on the part of the interview team is especially important given the nature of some survey topics. Please describe the quality assurance protocol that will be followed.

A respondent who is verbally abusive or who clearly asks to be removed from calling should not be contacted again once they have refused. However, eligible persons who may initially refuse to participate with a 'soft' refusal should be contacted again by an interviewer trained in refusal conversion strategies.

BPHC would like the selected applicant to provide a toll-free line to respondents which would allow them to call at their convenience if they had questions about the survey, wanted to complete the interview, or wanted to give feedback. In addition, a BPHC staff number will be available for respondents wishing to follow-up directly with BPHC to verify the survey authenticity or provide feedback.

BPHC requires remote access for pretesting of CATI system programming prior to the start of live interviewing. Also, BPHC requires the ability to remotely live-monitor interviewers via audio tie-in, and visual of the CATI program, upon request. Monthly status reports to monitor data collection progress are also desired.

Deliverables

Deliverables include first month's raw dataset, a first three month's dataset, a mid-year dataset, and end year unweighted and weighted SAS datasets and methods report for interviews among Boston residents. The weighted dataset should include a design weight consistent with CDC BRFSS methods. Additionally, data should be post-stratified twice, using CDC methods, producing two distinct final weight variables by applying a raking algorithm to iteratively adjust the design weighted sample to match the population for specific demographic dimensions. The first final weight shall include raking on race/ethnicity, race/ethnicity by gender, gender by age group, educational status, marital status, race/ethnicity by age group. The second final weight shall include raking on the CDC specified dimensions for 2023 BRFSS. These may include such elements as age by gender, age group by gender, race/ethnicity, education, marital status, housing tenure, gender by race/ethnicity, age group by race/ethnicity, phone ownership. BPHC would like the selected applicant to provide details to BPHC Research staff on the weight variables design and calculation in the fall of 2023 for BPHC review and approval. Please describe in the proposal your organization's expertise and experience conducting BRFSS and/or similar complex survey design weight calculations, including consideration of an overlapping dual frame sample design, and your ability to adapt such calculations to the Boston population. Additionally, please describe your expertise with applying imputation techniques for treatment of missing data, and methods for containing design effects during the weighting process.

The final methods report should include descriptions of the sample design for both landline and cell phone samples, the screening process, the data collection protocol, the survey content, the quality assurance protocol and interviewer monitoring, a thorough description of the weight design methodologies, data processing procedures, data quality indicators and survey response rates following American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) guidance. In addition, a survey code book that matches variable names to their corresponding question numbers and/or description, including design variables, is required. A copy of the statistical software code used in weighting should be included.

Please complete the cost of services table on the following page by providing prices for the items listed. All prices listed by the applicant shall be inclusive of all charges, including delivery. In response to this RFP please describe how your organization can meet the needs of the BPHC regarding the project elements outlined above.

For data collected via the requested overlapping dual-frame sampling method specified in this RFP:

	Price (e.g.: \$100,000.00)				
Total Sample Size	Landline 25%/ Cellphone 75%	Landline 20%/ Cellphone 80%	Landline 15%/ Cellphone 85%	Landline 10%/ Cellphone 90%	Landline 5%/ Cellphone 95%
2,000 Interviews					
2,500 Interviews					
3,000 Interviews					
3,500 Interviews					
4,000 Interviews					

The contract time period is December 19, 2022 through June 30, 2024. The Applicant must conduct on-going monthly BBRFSS data collection among Boston residents for a full 12-month cycle beginning in January 2023. Deliverables, which must be submitted within two weeks of completing data collection for that period, include first month’s raw dataset, first three month’s dataset, and mid-year dataset. Final deliverables include end of project year unweighted and weighted SAS dataset and methods report for interviews among Boston residents. The final datasets and methods report for the data collection are to be submitted to BPHC by February 28, 2024.

IV. Minimum Qualifications

Proposers must possess the following qualifications for each role and assignment as indicated:

A qualified applicant must possess the following in order to have their proposal considered and perform the service as described herein:

- 1) Have a minimum of 5 years of experience in the collection of interview surveys with a complex survey design via a computer-aided telephone interviewing process.
- 2) Experience weighting data collected from a complex survey design.
- 3) Experience collecting data from both landline and cellular telephone samples.
- 4) Experience collecting health survey data with highly sensitive topics.

V. Application Instructions

In writing the proposal, provide a clear and concise description of how the requirements can be met as set forth in the Scope of Services listed in the RFP including the Cost of Services (page X) to indicate pricing. The Boston Public Health Commission is exempt from payment for Massachusetts sales tax and tax should not be included.

The BPHC reserves the right to waive informalities in any or all Proposals; to reject any or all Proposals; to revise the RFP and re-request for proposals, if it is in the public's interest to do so.

Applicants must complete and submit the reference request form (Reference Form) found in this RFP.

VI. Submission Instructions

Please submit your Proposal by: November 14, 2022 via email by 5:00 PM EST

Subject: 2023 BBRFSS RFP Proposal

Email: Procurement@bphc.org

Reference Form

Request for Proposal: 2023 Boston Behavioral Risk Factor Survey

Company / Entity Name: _____

Contact: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

List three (3) service contracts related or similar to the scope of service as described within the past ten (10) years.

Business Reference 1

Company or Entity: _____

Contact Name & Phone: _____

Brief Description of Work: _____

Amount of Contract: _____

Contract Start / End Date: _____

Business Reference 2

Company or Entity: _____

Contact Name & Phone: _____

Brief Description of Work: _____

Amount of Contract: _____

Contract Start / End Date: _____

Business Reference 3

Company or Entity: _____

Contact Name & Phone: _____

Brief Description of Work: _____

Amount of Contract: _____

Contract Start / End Date: _____