

ISTA Advocate Research & Value Delivery Program



Request For Proposal

DATE ISSUED	REQUIRED SUBMITTAL DATE	DOCUMENT NO.	PAGE NO.
12/20/16	1/20/17	RFP - 0004	1 of 5
TITLE Develop Test Protocol for ecommerce Retailer Shipping Systems Phase 1: Mapping Packaged-Product Handling Within ecommerce Retailer Shipping Systems			

SCOPE OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH PROJECT

The International Safe Transit Association (ISTA) on behalf of the members of its Advocate Research & Value Delivery Program (ARVD) seeks proposals for the following research program.

Establish a data driven packaged-product pre-shipment performance test protocol that can be used to evaluate the suitability of the transport packaging to protect its contents from the hazards encountered in the eCommerce retailer shipping environment.

PROJECT PURPOSE AND DESCRIPTION

Identify common handling processes for all ecommerce channels including retailers, consolidators, and transportation modes with the intent to standardize a recommended voluntary method for replicating this unique supply chain channel.

SCOPE OF WORK SOUGHT IN THIS REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The scope of work sought in this RFP focuses specifically on **Phase 1: Mapping packaged-product handling within ecommerce retailer shipping systems**. The remainder of the phases may be revised after review of deliverables from Phase 1 by ISTA. The phases beyond the scope of work sought in this RFP are shown below to provide researchers visibility of the project goals in their entirety

Project Phases:

1. **The First Phase is to identify all current ecommerce product distribution system activities of CPG's and map each one to show commonality and differences. This should include all activities (repackaging, handling, as well as internal and external movements and modes) from receipt from original manufacturer of the product through final delivery identifying all shipment modes to the consumer for all package types identified in Project Phases section 2a. This will assist the Advocate Council in developing priorities for data collection in phase 2.**
2. The second phase consists of facility visits, including interviews, observations, photos, videos for major retailers in the U.S. ISTA and the Advocate Council will assist in providing connections for service providers to eCommerce retailers and consolidators. Documentation of the storage handling process and packing criteria/determination involved in the distribution of CPG's, within the eCommerce retailer shipping systems and consolidators, for multiple retailers and consolidators, including but not limited to, Amazon.com, Wayfair.com, Walmart.com, Target.com, consolidation DC's, and other high grossing online retailers with wide variety of CPG products for sale.
 - a. Create a flow diagram and provide types of potential hazard points (i.e. drop (how high), vibration (conveyor belt, rollers, etc.) handling (manual or automatic)) on commonality of various systems.
 - 1) Include packages that are handled irregularly due to:

- a) Density
 - b) Size
 - c) Weight
 - 2) Include all package types in ISTA 3A:
 - a) Flat
 - b) Elongated
 - c) Standard
 - d) Small
 - e) Or develop other types
 - 3) Include all package types in ISTA 3B:
 - a) Standard (200 lb. or less)
 - b) Standard (over 200 lb.)
 - c) Cylindrical
 - d) Palletized or skidded
 - e) Or develop other types
- b. Report findings to ISTA and Advocacy Council to determine what hazard modes are different than known test conditions, or use to establish what needs further measurement. Where needed, and determined from Phase 1, commence electronic data measurement of the environment including:
- 1) Deploy and retrieve appropriate instruments for data collection
 - 2) Record shock, temperature, and humidity, both inside distribution facilities (handling equipment, sorting operations, etc.) and during transport between facilities as appropriate
 - 3) Analyze the data for incorporation of the results into the protocol test elements and parameters
 - 4) Consolidate information, photos, videos
 - 5) Electronic visibility and access to data
 - 6) Preparation for protocol creation
- c. Data returned should show the appropriate activity for each packaging type through the various distribution channels. Data must be in a format to facilitate development of correct transit tests to predict damage and allow correct package protection development.

DELIVERABLES

The Scope of Work Sought states requirements for the project, including the services and the tangible work products to be delivered, and the tasks the Advocate Council has identified as necessary to meet those requirements. Proposals should be tailored specifically to Phase 1. We are looking for the packaging, handling and shipping activities commonality among ecommerce retailers product distribution systems.

Required deliverables include:

1. Perform literature search of previous published research to identify the 50 top volume ecommerce shippers of packaged goods in the US. as well as a description of the distribution systems used in all CPG ecommerce channel classes to include, but not limited to, retailers, wholesalers, distributors and consolidators.
2. Through interviews or citing current published information diagram the handling, packaging and shipping activities in a flow chart format for all package types identified in Project Phases section 2a, including all high level variations. Verify this with the company whenever possible.
3. Using this information group those shippers by class such as retailers, wholesalers, distributors and consolidators or product type.
4. Group those within a class using similar distribution methodologies (i.e. direct from store, through a consolidator, etc.)

5. Compile a flow chart showing the distribution activities for each common group including, but not limited to, handling occurrences, transportation modes and distances as well as storage times and conditions noting any differences with varying CPG categories (packaged product types). This should include all activities (repackaging, handling and internal movements to name a few) from receipt from original manufacturer of the product through final delivery to the consumer. (The proposed mapping methodology must be submitted with the researcher's proposal and approved in advance by ISTA.)
6. The final report should be submitted in both written as well as Powerpoint format.
7. The primary researcher will be asked to present the report to the ISTA Advocate Council via WebEx at a mutually agreeable date.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRINCIPAL CONSULTANT/S

Knowledge of eCommerce supply chain components including transport systems, warehousing and handling systems is required. Past experience in transport distribution environment measurement or observational study of supply chains is preferred.

FORM OF THE PROPOSAL

Provide two copies (or one electronic version) of the proposal that must include the following sections:

1. Qualifications:

- A brief description of the proposing firm /research organization/ individual.
- A detailed description of the proposed individuals that would be assigned to this project, including role, title, experience, and education.
- Examples of similar research projects conducted in the past 5 years.
- At least three references, including the names of individual contacts and telephone numbers.
- Any other qualifications deemed necessary to complete the work if contracted by ISTA.

2. Fees:

Give a total cost estimate for time and materials within the scope and timeline you propose including payment terms and schedule. Progress payments can be considered provided the proposal identifies how project progress can be verified. (i.e. upon submission of completed literature search, initial draft, final report, etc.)

- The proposal must include the total cost to complete the tasks described in the project scope for Phase 1 of this project.
- Representative examples of consultant(s) and support staff that might be involved in specific activities. No more than five examples are requested; each example should include the name of the individual and a brief statement of their qualifications.
- List any other fees applicable to the work requested by ISTA, acknowledging they must be approved in advance.

3. Project Timeline:

A detailed timeline should accompany the project plan. The expectation for timeline to completion is 90 days after project is awarded.

4. Conflicts Analysis: (If necessary)

Assurance that the firm has conducted an initial conflicts analysis and has not uncovered any potential conflicts.

SELECTION PROCESS

The ISTA staff, its Technical Division Board and the Technical Representatives of the ARVD consortium will evaluate all proposals and may conduct telephone conferences to clarify information such as approach, timing and cost. Final selection will be made by the voting members of the ARVD.

All proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Overall proposal suitability: proposal must meet the purpose, scope and needs included herein and be presented in a clear and organized manner
- Experience: Potential contactors will be evaluated on their experience as it pertains to the scope of this project
- Previous work: Potential contractors will be evaluated on examples of their work pertaining to similar research projects as well as testimonials and references
- Value and cost: Potential contractors will be evaluated on the cost of their proposal based on the work to be performed in accordance with the scope of this project
- Technical expertise and experience
- The ability of the potential contractors to complete the project according to the proposed timeline
- Provide any other specific criteria that may be required or helpful for evaluation of this project.

NOTE: ISTA will provide a letter of introduction explaining the purpose of the research for use with those companies where direct contact needs to be made to assure accuracy of information.

RFP TIMELINE

12/2016 – Re-distribution of RFP

1/06/17 - Deadline for vendors to submit written questions and/or non-mandatory notice of intent.

1/13/17- Questions with written answers provided to all interested researchers

1/20/17- Deadline for submitting proposals

1/27/17- Finalists notified & interviewed

2/13/17 - Vendor selected & signed

SUBMISSIONS

All proposals must be received by 1/20/17. Address proposals to:

A.J. Gruber
ISTA
1400 Abbot Road, Suite 160
East Lansing, MI 48823

Or by email to ajgruber@ista.org with a copy to dwight@consultschmidt.com.

Questions regarding this RFP or your proposal submission may be addressed to A.J. Gruber at the above email address, or telephone 517-333-3437, ext 212 or to Dwight Schmidt, Advocate Program Manager by emailing dwight@consultschmidt.com or calling 317-753-1437

