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## **Request for Proposal (RFP) Library Community Survey, Assessment, Analysis, and Strategic Plan Development**

**Issued by:** Rye Free Reading Room (“the Library”)

**Issue Date:** April 3, 2026

**Proposal Due:** April 20, 2026

**Submission Method:** Email to Chris Shoemaker (cshoemaker@ryelibrary.org) and Jim Steinthal (jimsteinthal@gmail.com) with subject line: “RFFR Request for Proposal – Community Survey & Strategic Plan – [Firm Name]”

**Primary Contacts:** Chris Shoemaker (Director, Rye Free Reading Room) and Jim Steinthal (Trustee, Rye Free Reading Room, and Chair of Strategic Planning Committee)

### 1. Background

Rye Free Reading Room is looking for a qualified library planning consultant to help us listen to our community and plan for the future. The selected consultant will design and run a community survey (and related outreach), analyze what we learn, and help the Library and Library Board of Trustees create a clear, practical strategic plan for the next several years.

#### 1.1 About Our Library and Community

Rye Free Reading Room serves the Rye, New York community, including people of many ages, backgrounds, languages, and interests. We provide free access to books and digital resources, programs and events, technology and learning support, and welcoming spaces to read, meet, and connect. As our community changes, we want to make sure the Library continues to be useful, inclusive, and responsive—so we are asking for expert help to gather community input and turn it into a practical plan for the years ahead.

### 2. Project Purpose and Goals

- Hear from a wide range of stakeholders—including staff, current patrons and residents who do not currently use the Library, donors, and other community organizations—and make it easy for everyone to participate.
- Collect useful survey and feedback data about awareness, use, satisfaction, and what people want from the Library.

- Look at current Library services, programs, collections, spaces, staffing, technology, and partnerships—and how they match community needs.
- Create a community-informed strategic plan with clear priorities and measurable outcomes for the next 3–5 years.
- Provide an easy-to-follow roadmap that shows what to do first, what can come later, and what resources may be needed.

### 3. Scope of Work

Please describe how you would do this work. The Library welcomes suggestions that make the process more inclusive, more effective, and easier for the community to take part in.

#### 3.1 Project Management and Kickoff

- Hold a kickoff meeting to confirm goals, roles, timeline, and how decisions will be made.
- Create a clear workplan with milestones, meeting dates, and review points.
- Provide regular updates and manage the project from start to finish.

#### 3.2 Community Survey Design and Administration

- Create a survey that asks about Library awareness, use, satisfaction, barriers, and what people want next.
- Include optional demographic questions so we can understand whether different groups are having different experiences—while protecting privacy.
- Offer the survey in additional languages as needed (e.g., Spanish).
- Recommend ways to reach a wide group of stakeholders (online and in-person options such as paper copies, partner sites, and events).
- Provide a survey schedule and a simple outreach plan the Library can use to promote participation.
- Run the survey, manage responses, and deliver clean data and summary results to the Library.

#### 3.3 Community Engagement Beyond the Survey

- Suggest and lead additional ways to hear from the community beyond the survey (for example: focus groups, interviews with the staff and key donors, pop-up listening, public meetings, youth and senior conversations).
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- Recruit participants in a way that includes people from different ages, backgrounds, and lived experiences.
- Provide discussion guides, run the sessions, and summarize what you hear.

### 3.4 Assessment, Data Review, and Environmental Scan

- Review Library information we share (such as service statistics, program attendance, circulation, digital use, community demographics, and past planning documents).
- Share key trends and examples from other libraries and communities that may be helpful for our planning.
- Identify what is working well, what needs attention, and what opportunities we should consider next.

### 3.5 Analysis and Findings

- Analyze survey results and what you hear through other engagement activities.
- Where helpful, break results down by groups (for example: age, user/non-user, and other demographics collected).
- Summarize the main findings in plain language, including what they mean for services, programs, collections, spaces, and operations.
- Share draft findings with Library leadership/Board for feedback before finalizing.

### 3.6 Strategic Plan Development

- Lead planning meetings with Library leadership and the Library Strategic Planning Committee to set direction and priorities.
- Write a strategic plan that is easy to understand and use (vision, mission, values, priorities, goals, measures of success, and key initiatives).
- Create an action plan that prioritizes the work (what to do now/next/later), who should lead it, and what resources may be needed.
- Present the plan to the Board for review and approval.

#### 4. Deliverables

1. Project workplan with schedule, roles, and engagement plan.
2. Survey instrument(s), outreach/promotion toolkit, and data collection plan.
3. Clean, de-identified survey dataset and codebook (as applicable), plus summary of methods.
4. Engagement summary (focus groups/interviews/listening sessions), including key themes.
5. Assessment/environmental scan summary.
6. Findings report and presentation (including charts/visuals suitable for Board/community sharing).
7. Draft strategic plan for review.
8. Final strategic plan (and executive summary/short version for public distribution).
9. Implementation roadmap with prioritization and suggested performance measures.

#### 5. Anticipated Timeline

The Library hopes to choose a consultant by May 19, 2026 and complete the project by October 1, 2026. Please include a proposed schedule in your response. Here is a sample timeline to show the general flow of the work:

- RFP issued: April 3, 2026
  - Questions due: April 15, 2026
  - Proposals due: April 20, 2026
  - Interviews : April 20-30, 2026
  - Selection/award: May 19, 2026
  - Project kickoff: May 26, 2026
  - Survey fielding period: May 25-June 30, 2026
  - Engagement sessions: May 25-June 30, 2026
  - Findings presentation: July/August 2026
  - Draft plan delivered: September 1, 2026
  - Final plan delivered: October 1, 2026
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## 6. Budget and Pricing Format

Please include a not-to-exceed total cost and a clear breakdown of costs by task and deliverable. If you use hourly rates, include rates and estimated hours by role. List any expected out-of-pocket expenses and any optional add-ons. Your price should include everything needed to complete the work (for example: labor, travel if proposed, materials, survey platform costs, printing/ mailing if proposed, and translation if proposed).

Task/Deliverable	Cost	Notes/Assumptions
Project management & kickoff	\$	
Survey design & administration	\$	
Additional engagement (optional/if proposed)	\$	
Assessment & environmental scan	\$	
Analysis & findings report/presentation	\$	
Strategic plan development	\$	
<b>Total not-to-exceed</b>	\$	

## 7. Minimum Qualifications

- Strong experience helping public libraries (or similar community organizations) with surveys, community input, and strategic planning.
- Ability to design a good survey and analyze results in a way that supports real decisions.
- Experience leading planning conversations with Library Boards, staff, and community stakeholders.
- Clear writing and communication skills, with reports and presentations that are easy to understand.
- A strong approach to inclusive and accessible community engagement (language access, ADA considerations, etc.).

## 8. Proposal Requirements

Please keep your proposal clear and easy to follow, and include the sections below (use the same numbering if you can):

1. **Cover letter** including primary contact information and a brief statement of interest.
2. **Firm/consultant profile** including office location(s), years in business, and relevant areas of practice.
3. **Project team** including roles, qualifications, and brief bios; identify any subcontractors.
4. **Understanding of the project** and key considerations for the Rye Fre Reading Room and its community.
5. **Proposed approach and methodology** for survey design, community engagement, analysis, and strategic planning.
6. **Equity and inclusion plan** describing how the proposer will reach diverse audiences and ensure accessible participation.
7. **Project schedule** with major milestones and deliverables.
8. **Deliverables** confirming what will be provided and in what formats.
9. **Pricing** as described in Section 6, including assumptions and any optional services.
10. **Relevant experience** with at least [3] comparable projects; include short case examples.
11. **References** for at least [3] clients, preferably public libraries (name, organization, email, phone, and project description).
12. **Sample work products** (links or attachments if permitted) such as survey reports, findings presentations, and strategic plans. Provide materials that do not disclose confidential information.

## 9. Submission Instructions

- Email your proposal as a PDF to: [cshoemaker@ryelibrary.org](mailto:cshoemaker@ryelibrary.org) and [jimsteinthal@gmail.com](mailto:jimsteinthal@gmail.com)
  - Proposals must be received by April 20, 2026
  - If you have questions, email them by April 15, 2026. The Library may share answers with all proposers.
  - The Library may request interviews or follow-up information.
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## 10. Evaluation Criteria

The Library will review proposals using the criteria below. We are looking for the best overall fit and value—not just the lowest price.

- Demonstrated understanding of the project and the Library’s goals.
- Strength and feasibility of the proposed methodology (survey rigor, engagement approach, analysis plan, planning facilitation).
- Equity-centered and accessible engagement strategy.
- Relevant experience and past performance on comparable projects.
- Qualifications of the proposed project team.
- Quality and clarity of proposed deliverables and communication approach.
- Proposed schedule and ability to meet timeline.
- Cost proposal and overall value.

## 11. Terms and Conditions

- **Right to choose:** The Library may accept or reject any proposal and may choose the proposal that best meets our needs.
  - **Changes during contracting:** The Library may negotiate and adjust scope, deliverables, timeline, and cost with the selected proposer.
  - **Proposal costs:** Preparing a proposal is at the proposer’s expense.
  - **Ownership of the work:** After payment, the Library will own the project deliverables (survey materials, anonymized data files, reports, and the strategic plan), except for any pre-existing tools the consultant clearly identifies as proprietary.
  - **Privacy and data security:** The consultant must protect respondent privacy and keep data secure. If any personal information is collected, it must be clearly explained (why it’s needed and how it will be used and stored).
  - **Accessibility:** Materials and final documents should be accessible (for example, accessible PDFs and slides).
  - **Insurance/contract:** The selected proposer may need to provide proof of insurance and sign the Library’s standard professional services agreement.
  - **Public records (if applicable):** Proposals may be shared publicly if required by law and Library policy.
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Appendix A. Library Profile

Appendix B. Available Background Materials

- 2023 – 2025 strategic plan
- 2025 Annual Report
- 2025 Statistical Summary
- 2026 Adopted Budget
- Floor Plan
- Organizational Chart

## Appendix A - Library Profile

The Rye Free Reading Room serves as a dynamic gathering place and center for lifelong learning for Rye residents of all ages and interests. Located at the heart of Rye on the Village Green, the library offers daily programs for the youngest readers and learners in Rye, with families gathering indoors and out for musical performers, story times, and other early literacy activities. Teens flock to the Teen Space for playing games and socializing, or studying with friends in the comfortable study booths or worktables. In addition to book discussion groups, adult patrons have access to art and museum lectures, financial literacy workshops, food and home décor classes, and regular author conversations. All users appreciate the two wood-burning fireplaces on the first floor, while the second floor features new study rooms and collaboration spaces in a tranquil environment. Caregivers and parents use the library Discovery Zone, open to ages 6 months to 6 years old, for self-guided imaginative play. Building blocks, sensory toys, felt boards, and Duplo stations are available all day, and the library has a pilot project with a local activity early childhood learning center to provide weekday afternoon activities for 5 and 6 year-old's in that space.

In addition to the main library, the Rye Free Reading Room has a branch location in The Osborn. While open to the public, the library primarily serves the residents of the Osborn.

In 2025, the library circulated 175,253 items, with 54,222 of those being children's item. 167,761 people crossed the physical threshold of the building, and 50,296 users accessed the library website. There were 1,408 programs at the library, with 29,397 attendees. 22,956 of those program attendees participated in children's programs. Library physical collections total 40,992, with 22,798 items in the adult collection and 15,097 items in the children's collection. The library has an Overdrive Advantage collection of 10,430 titles.

As an association library, the Rye Free Reading Room is a private 501(c)3 organization, with oversight provided by elected members of the association. The library board currently consists of 19 members. The two co-presidents of the Auxiliary Board of the Rye Free Reading Room share one additional board seat, while the City Liaison serves as an ex-officio member. Membership is open to anyone who makes a donation to the annual campaign in the previous year, and there are currently 515 members of the association. Membership is tracked by household, foundation, or business, rather than on an individual level.

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The Rye Free Reading Room is a member of the Westchester Library System, which consists of the 38 Westchester County libraries. The member libraries have a shared catalog, borrowing privileges at any member library, and inter-library material delivery. 27,031 digital items are shared across the Westchester Library System.

Rye is a family-oriented community, with a vibrant downtown, an abundance of recreational resources, and a well-regarded school system. The population is 16,592 as of the 2020 census, with 29.2% of the population under the age of 18. Recreation options include Rye Playland, Rye Golf Club, Rye Nature Center, Rye Arts Center, Rye YMCA, Rye Town Park, and a number of private shore clubs. The public school system consists of three elementary schools, a middle school, and a high school. Rye Country Day, Resurrection Grammar School, and School of the Holy Child provide private school education opportunities.

## **Appendix B - Available Background Materials**

- 2023 – 2025 strategic plan
- 2025 Annual Report
- 2025 Statistical Summary
- 2026 Adopted Budget
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