



RFP #25-05

Marketing Campaign Services for MassArt Art Museum

Bid Addendum #1 – Questions and Answers

Issue Date:

Friday, May 16, 2025

- **Q: Can you please elaborate more on your expectations around organic social media management? It sounds like the MAAM will own the content development across the board, will the firm be responsible for posting the content? Developing content concepts to be executed by the team? Engage with and manage comments?**
 - A: Our expectation is that the firm will collaborate with MAAM to develop content concepts that align with the overall campaign strategy and objectives. MAAM will retain responsibility for posting organic content and managing community engagement, including monitoring and responding to comments. However, we welcome the firm's input on best practices to strengthen performance in these areas.
- **Q: Do you intend to keep supporting the museum through ongoing marketing beyond the time frame outlined in the RFP? What factors are going into this consideration?**
 - A: Yes—the intent is for MAAM to carry forward the momentum of this campaign beyond the engagement period outlined in the RFP. This campaign is designed to lay a strong foundation for long-term visibility and engagement. Decisions to move forward in any direction will be based on KPIs and performance of the initial campaign. This campaign is a springboard to help MAAM establish a broader presence and create the conditions for sustained marketing and outreach under its own direction moving forward.
- **Q: Would you be open to the firm developing creative for campaigns, under the brand guidance of the MAAM?**
 - A: Yes, MAAM is open to the selected firm developing creative assets, provided they align with our established brand guidance.
- **Q: Where is the budget for this project coming from? Is this an ongoing marketing budget or a one-time source of funding, like a grant?**
 - A: This is not a one-time or grant funded project.
- **Q: Have you run similar campaigns/promotional efforts for the museum in the past? What did those look like (strategically) and how did they perform?**
 - A: The most comparable awareness effort took place around MAAM's opening in early 2020 and included tactics such as MBTA advertising. Since then, promotional efforts have been more limited in scale and focused on specific exhibitions—for example, targeted campaigns for *The Myth of Normal*, which included interior MBTA Green Line car ads and platform placements. This upcoming campaign represents the first broad-based awareness push since the museum's launch and is intended to build sustained visibility and engagement.
- **Q: Messaging: Understanding that the overall goal is general awareness and increasing foot traffic during the Boston Public Art Triennial, are there any specific exhibits you are promoting?**
 - A: Yes—MAAM has commissioned [Nicholas Galanin](#) to mount an exhibition for and beyond the Boston Triennial. *Nicholas Galanin: Aáni yéi xat duwasáakw (I am called Land)* will be on view at MAAM from May 22–November 30, 2025. More information about the exhibit [here](#). That said, one of MAAM's unique challenges—and strengths—is that we do

not have a permanent collection. Each exhibition season is a reinvention, presenting new artists, new ideas, and new themes. For this reason, the campaign's focus is less about promoting a single show and more about communicating MAAM's broader identity: a free, contemporary art museum that is always evolving, relevant, and deeply connected to the cultural and civic life of the city. In the context of a general awareness campaign, this broader messaging is especially important.

- **Q: Target Audience: Aside from the broad target of residents, families, and visitors, including but not limited to contemporary arts enthusiasts in the Greater Boston Area, is there a particular demographic age, income level, or education level to lean towards?**
 - A: We're looking to the selected firm for guidance in refining our target audiences. While we broadly aim to reach residents, families, visitors, and contemporary art enthusiasts in Greater Boston, we welcome insights on which demographic segments are most likely to engage with MAAM. We've recently completed a multi-year audience evaluation and will share those findings to help inform campaign development.
- **Q: Can you share any data on the demographic make-up of your current visitors?**
 - A: Data will be shared with the selected firm.
- **Q: Can you provide examples of previous campaigns?**
 - A: Examples and data on previous campaigns will be shared with the selected firm.
- **Q: KPIs: Will MAAM be providing access to reporting systems for attendance and newsletter sign-ups for the purpose of integrating the data into the media reporting system?**
 - A: Yes, MAAM will provide access to relevant data.
- **Q: Are you able to provide us with historical monthly traffic data? If so could we get the full year 2024 and year to date 2025 (monthly)?**
 - A: This data is available and will be provided to the selected firm.
- **Q: While we have reviewed the Boston Public Art Triennial website, are you able to share more information about this partnership?**
 - A: MAAM is proud to be a partner and exhibition site for the inaugural Boston Public Art Triennial. However, this campaign is centered on MAAM itself—its identity and long-term visibility—rather than the Triennial partnership, which is time-limited.
- **Q: What tech stack do you employ to track attendance and newsletter sign-up?**
 - A: Attendance is documented via Eventbrite: general admissions, groups and tours attendance, and events and programs attendance. Newsletter sign-up is done through Mailchimp.
- **Q: Will media invoices be paid through MAAM or the agency?**
 - Billing will be discussed with the selected firm.
- **Q: Would MAAM be willing to consider a monthly fee retainer structure as a compensation model, with key deliverables/KPIs clearly outlined for this engagement?**

- Proposals should include your proposed fee structure keeping in mind the overall project budget.
- **Q: Is there a budget or budget range for this RFP?**
 - \$50,000.
- **Q: Please confirm, the \$50k budget is a total across the months of June, July, and August, it is not \$50k per month**
 - This is total.
- **Q: What is the average turnaround time from your creative team for Google and Paid Social ads?**

Roughly two weeks depending on the scope of the deliverables.
- **Q: Do you have benchmark organizations you would like your ads to emulate?**

A: We plan to share examples and inspirations with the selected firm.
- **Q: Do you have a Meta Manager Account already setup? If so, are there any current red flags or issues? Would you be willing to provide access to us so we can view what was previously run?**
 - A: Yes, we have a Meta Manager Account. Details will be discussed with the selected firm.
- **Q: What CRM are you currently using?**
 - A: MAAM does not currently use a formal CRM. We capture attendance and basic demographic and psychographic data through Eventbrite, and manage email communications via Mailchimp. We see this as an opportunity for future growth.
- **Q: Can you provide us with customer lists for retargeting and lookalike audiences?**

The selected firm will be provided with relevant and available data.
- **Q: Do you currently create reels in house for Instagram? If we recommend creating reels for social media, would you be able to create and send us videos with our direction?**
 - A: Yes, we currently create Instagram reels in-house. Depending on campaign needs and capacity, we may be able to produce additional video content with direction from the selected firm, but that is still to be determined.
- **Q: Do you have video content for non-social placement? (ConnectedTV, online video, out of home placements, etc)**

Not specifically for paid channels at this time, no.
- **Q: Can you share what prompted the timing of this RFP? For example, is it aligned with new institutional goals, learnings from prior campaigns, or internal shifts in strategic focus?**

A: This campaign has been a long-standing goal for both MassArt and MAAM, and the timing reflects a convergence of institutional focus and strategic alignment. The upcoming inaugural Boston Public Art Triennial, as well as a fundraising campaign,

presents a timely and high-visibility opportunity to anchor this campaign.

- **Q: Are there any lessons learned or challenges from previous campaigns—either internal or agency-led—that would be helpful for us to consider when shaping this strategy?**
 - A: One of our biggest challenges has been moving beyond piecemeal efforts toward a more cohesive, long-term strategy. Limited bandwidth and resources have made it difficult to establish a consistent feedback loop or to measure the true impact of past campaigns. We're looking to the selected firm for guidance in developing a strategy that includes clear success metrics and a reflective process—so we can understand what's working, what isn't, and how to adjust future efforts accordingly.
- **Q: Given the campaign's timing alongside the Public Art Triennial, are there specific goals or gaps from past public-facing efforts that you're aiming to address with this one?**
 - A: In addition to driving greater awareness of MAAM—as measured in part by increased foot traffic—we're aiming to address a persistent gap in public understanding of the relationship between MAAM and MassArt. This campaign is an opportunity to clearly communicate that MAAM is the official museum of Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Reinforcing this connection is a key objective, as it strengthens both institutional identity, brand reputation, and community engagement.
- **Q: For the budget breakdown section, is there a preferred format or template you'd like us to use when detailing allocations across media, strategy, and other services?**
 - A: We encourage as much detail as possible in the budget breakdown. Clearly outlining allocations across media, strategy, creative, and other services will help us better understand the scope and value of your proposal. The format/template you use to do so is your choice.
- **Q: Will agencies outside of Massachusetts be considered?**
 - A: Yes.
- **Q: Is there an incumbent? If so do you expect them to submit?**
 - A: No, there is no incumbent.
- **Q: Can you provide clarification around the time period paid media and weekly status meetings are expected to cover? Metrics and Reporting and Goals and Objectives both reference June-Aug, but in the scope of work it says "This campaign will coincide with the Boston Public Art Triennial (May 22-Oct 31, 2025) and may continue post-Triennial...." Should we plan on a 3 month period?**
 - A: A: Yes, you should plan for an initial three-month campaign period, roughly June through August. While the campaign aligns with the Triennial (May–October), the focus is on building momentum during that window. Future extensions beyond August may be considered based on performance and KPIs. The goal is to establish a strong foundation that MAAM can carry forward independently.
- **Q: Do you have any demographic info on current museum patrons?**
 - A: Data will be shared with the selected firm.

- **Q: Is the funding for this work already an approved part of the MAAM budget?**
 - A: Funding for this campaign is already approved.
- **Q: Please clarify your expectations for the timeline of this project. Will media planning, creative production, and the campaign itself need to occur within the June 9-August 1 timeframe? Does the August 1 project completion date mean all advertising must cease by August 1?**
 - A: There is no required deadline, timeframe is a minimum.
- **Q: Have you engaged in a similar paid media effort in the past? If so, what were the results?**
 - A: The most comparable awareness effort was around MAAM's opening in early 2020, which included tactics like MBTA advertising. While limited in scope, we consider it a success in helping introduce the museum to the public. This upcoming campaign is our first opportunity to build on that foundation with a more robust and sustained paid media strategy.
- **Q: How do you currently track museum attendance, particularly from off-site marketing efforts?**
 - A: Attendance is documented via Eventbrite: general admissions, groups and tours attendance, and events and programs attendance.
- **Q: Are you using analytics based web tracking?**
 - A: We currently rely on the built-in analytics provided by our website, social media, and email newsletter platforms. However, we do not have a centralized system for tracking or regularly reporting on these metrics. We see this as an opportunity to strengthen our approach and would welcome guidance from the selected firm.
- **Q: How do you currently track newsletter sign ups? Are email addresses entered into a CRM? If so, which one?**
 - A: Newsletter sign-up is done through Mailchimp. MAAM does not currently use a formal CRM.
- **Q: We see that the Massachusetts College of Art and Design Foundation, Inc is a 501(c)(3) and is therefore eligible for Google Ads Grants. Are you affiliated with the Foundation and could Google Ads Grant funds be allocated to this campaign?**
 - A: Detailed funding will be discussed with the selected firm.
- **Q: Do you have customer email lists available that can be used to enhance paid media targeting?**
 - A: Data will be shared with the selected firm.
- **Q: How closely does the MAAM marketing team collaborate with the College marketing team? How have you previously worked together to brand the College and Museum as partners?**
 - A: Very closely. MAAM and the College marketing team collaborate regularly, and this

campaign is an opportunity to further strengthen public understanding of MAAM as the MassArt Museum—an integral part of the College.

- **Q: In section 3A "Media Placements" you mention advertising via social media media platforms, print, OOH and geomarketing. Are you also open to paid search?**
 - A: Yes.
- **Q: What are the in-house creative team's capabilities? Specifically, do you have graphic design, copywriting, photography, videography, and landing page design and development capabilities in-house?**
 - A: We do not have full in-house capabilities.
- **Q: Do you have a preferred RFP response format? (I.e. Document, Slide Deck, etc.)**
 - A: There is no required format.
- **Q: In the Project Plan section of our response, what level of detail are you looking for?**
 - A: Plan must be clear and informative in order for MAAM and MassArt to thoroughly evaluate each proposal.
- **Q: Are there any required documents or appendices for this RFP aside from our response and the Certificate of Non-Collusion?**
 - A: Not at the time of submission. The selected vendor will be required to sign the Commonwealth of MA Standard Contract.
- **Q: Beyond the stated goals of raising awareness and driving summer visitation, how will internal stakeholders judge success at the close of the engagement (e.g., board sentiment, press coverage, donor interest)?**
 - A: In addition to driving greater awareness of MAAM—as measured in part by increased foot traffic—we're aiming to address a persistent gap in public understanding of the relationship between MAAM and MassArt. This campaign is an opportunity to clearly communicate that MAAM is the official museum of Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Reinforcing this connection is a key objective, as it strengthens both institutional identity, prospective student awareness, brand reputation, and community engagement.
- **Q: Are there priority KPIs other than attendance, newsletter sign-ups, and social engagement that matter to campus leadership (e.g., earned-media value, student recruitment inquiries, Triennial-related merchandise sales)?**
 - A: No, those are the main KPIs.
- **Q: What visitor behaviors after the Triennial would signal that the campaign achieved "sustained engagement" (repeat visits, membership conversions, event RSVPs, etc.)?**
 - A: Increased attendance over the course of the year (events occur weekly, monthly and annually (exhibitions), so repeat visitors and engagement is critical, as is WOM.
- **Q: You list three broad segments; which micro-segments drive the highest lifetime value for**

MAAM (e.g., college-educated millennials, nearby K-12 educators, art collectors)?

- A: As a teaching museum, MAAM delivers the highest value to MassArt students, who are central to our mission and engagement strategy. For this campaign, however, we're focused on two key priority audiences:
 - artists, makers, creators, and designers
 - local audiences aged 18–34

These segments align with MAAM's broader goals of fostering creative exploration and public engagement, and they reflect our role as both a public-facing institution and an educational resource.

- **Q: What attitudinal or barrier research exists on why Bostonians choose the MFA or Gardner over MAAM, and can we see it?**
 - A: Information will be shared with the selected firm.
- **Q: How do you currently capture ZIP-code-level visitor data, and is it available for geotargeting/attribution analysis?**
 - A: MAAM collects zip code data via Eventbrite ticketing and newsletter sign-up. We will make the data available to the selected firm.
- **Q: Are there equity-in-access goals (language, accessibility, free public transit partnerships) we should weave into targeting?**
 - A: Not at this time.
- **Q: How would you articulate MAAM's personality in three adjectives, and how (if at all) should it diverge from MassArt's voice?**
 - A: *Fearless. Fresh. Fun.* These three adjectives reflect MAAM's personality and our approach to contemporary art and audience engagement. For a fuller understanding of how we articulate our identity and priorities, we encourage firms to review MAAM's value statements—*Open, Evolving, Involving, Illuminating, and Visionary*—at maam.massart.edu/about.
- **Q: What signature MAAM stories (artist collaborations, community programs) are under-leveraged and could become hero content during the Triennial?**
 - A: To be discussed with the selected firm.
- **Q: Do you foresee any brand-safety considerations when pairing MAAM with Triennial installations that are provocative or politically charged?**
 - A: Not at this time.
- **Q: The RFP references a \$50 k budget—does that figure include paid-media dollars and agency fees, or are working/media funds separate?**
 - A: That is inclusive.
- **Q: If \$50 k is all-in, what minimum share must go to working media vs. agency services to**

satisfy procurement guidelines?

- A: There is no minimum requirement.
- **Q: Which channels already outperform for MAAM (organic social, email, search)? Can we review historic dashboards to sharpen the mix?**
 - A: Performance analytics will be shared with the selected firm.
- **Q: Would you consider a small contingency fund for opportunistic Triennial-week guerrilla or creator activations?**
 - A: Yes.
- **Q: Are the tactics you outline under Media Placements suggestions or are they mandatory requirements? Given the very tight timeframe and limited budget, we would probably recommend different tactics.**
 - A: There are no requirements from MAAM or MassArt.
- **Q: You request weekly progress reports; what analytics stack (GA4, Sprout, Ticketing CRM) should our dashboards integrate with?**
 - A: GA4 would be preferred.
- **Q: Is there access to first-party ticketing or Wi-Fi data we can anonymize to build a visitation look-alike model?**
 - A: We will share ticketing data with the selected firm.
- **Q: How will you measure lift in “unified awareness” of MassArt + MAAM—brand-tracker survey, search-share-of-voice, Net Promoter Score?**
 - A: We’d look to guidance and recommendations from the selected firm on how best to measure lift in unified awareness.
- **Q: Which MassArt functions (marketing, advancement, curatorial, student engagement) must sign off on creative/placements, and what is the ideal approval SLA?**
 - A: MAAM and MassArt Marketing.
- **Q: Content creation is in-house; how many creative rounds can we assume, and do you have existing brand templates we must honor?**
 - A: Up to three rounds. There are existing brand guidelines to work from.
- **Q: Will the dedicated account manager attend the weekly 30-minute meeting alongside both marketing and museum stakeholders, or will those be separate touchpoints?**
 - A: All will be in attendance.
- **Q: Are there Commonwealth guidelines on diversity-owned media placements or vendor subcontracting we should factor in?**
 - A: There are no specific requirements as it relates to this engagement.
- **Q: For out-of-home buys on MBTA or city property, does MassArt hold existing contracts or**

nonprofit rates we can leverage?

- A: There may be non-profit rates depending on the agency. No existing partnerships.

- **Q: What invoice cadence and documentation does the Commonwealth require for prompt (Net-30) payment on media outlays?**

- A: Invoices may be submitted weekly, bi-weekly or monthly. If invoices include the cost of media outlays, those invoices should include copies of the invoices from the media platforms or publishers that match the outlay. For digital campaigns, please include screenshots from the ad platforms showing spend, delivery, and campaign IDs. Also we would expect to receive proof of delivery (tear sheets, etc) where applicable.

- **Q: With finalist interviews set for the week of June 2, is creative expected to go live immediately on award (target week of June 9) or is there flexibility for a discovery sprint?**

- A: There is flexibility.

- **Q: Are there fixed Triennial launch events or press moments we must align with between May 22 and August 1?**

- A: There is flexibility. The Triennial launch is May 22.

- **Q: What blackout dates (campus closures, fiscal year-end) could impede approvals or media flighting?**

- A: There are no blackout dates.

- **Q: What contingencies exist if a Triennial installation is delayed or receives controversial press—should the campaign pivot messaging or pause spend?**

- A: This will be discussed as part of contracting.

- **Q: How should we handle overruns if paid social CPMs spike during peak tourism weeks?**

- A: To be discussed with the selected firm.

- **Q: Are there data-privacy constraints (e.g., FERPA, COPPA for on-campus minors) limiting pixel placement or retargeting?**

- A: Yes. Specifics will be discussed as part of the campaign planning.

- **Q: Assuming success, what does an ideal Phase 2 look like—continued paid support, in-house enablement, or a retainer relationship?**

- A: Any of those are possible.

- **Q: Are there forthcoming exhibitions or capital campaigns in FY26 we should future-proof in creative and data architecture?**

- A: To be discussed with the selected firm.

- **Q: How might success of this pilot inform broader MassArt branding initiatives or admissions marketing in 2026?**

- A: In addition to driving greater awareness of MAAM—as measured in part by increased foot traffic—we're aiming to address a persistent gap in public understanding of the

relationship between MAAM and MassArt. This campaign is an opportunity to clearly communicate that MAAM is the official museum of Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Reinforcing this connection is a key objective, as it strengthens both institutional identity, prospective student awareness, brand reputation, and community engagement.

- **Q: Has MAAM worked with an agency in the past to provide similar types of services? Is there a recent or current incumbent?**
 - A: No, there is no incumbent agency.
- **Q: What past marketing efforts have been most successful in helping you reach your goals? Is there anything you've tried that you wouldn't want to replicate?**
 - A: Our past marketing efforts have been relatively limited, so we're less focused on replicating past strategies and more focused on building a strong foundation going forward. As part of this campaign, we're especially interested in establishing a feedback loop that can inform future decision-making. We would look to the selected firm for expertise in helping us define success metrics and build a framework for ongoing learning.
- **Q: How would you describe what campaign strategy collaboration typically looks like between MAAM staff and the agency?**
 - A: As this is MAAM's first major awareness campaign of this scale since its opening, there isn't an established model for agency collaboration. We're looking to build a strong, communicative working relationship and welcome the firm's recommendations on how best to structure that collaboration.
- **Q: What types of media assets is MAAM prepared to provide? Can the staff produce video assets for media placement?**
 - A: MAAM can provide existing brand assets, photography, and exhibition-related visuals. At this time, we likely don't have the resources—either staffing or budget—to produce new high-quality video assets specifically for media placement.
- **Q: Please confirm that once a creative direction is determined, that all content will be created by MAAM staff? Or, would the agency's creative team still need to be engaged given the quick turnaround?**
 - A: If the agency has creative capabilities, that would be value-add.
- **Q: Based on the timing of this contract and the desired launch date, by when can MAAM's team deliver the creative assets needed for paid media and marketing activation?**
 - A: We are hoping for a two week turnaround.
- **Q: Is there an expected percentage of the contract amount that must be allocated towards paid media?**
 - A: No.