



**Council for Research Excellence
Big Data Committee**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Validation of DEP Audience Attributes & Behaviors and Their Application to Online and Offline Audiences

The mission of the Council for Research Excellence (CRE) is to advance the knowledge and practice of methodological research on audience measurement.

Purpose: The Big Data Committee seeks to explore the extent to which audience attributes and behaviors -- as defined by Data Enrichment Providers (DEPs) -- can be validated in a given marketplace. **The study is intended to compare and contrast various methods and approaches of validation with Big Data sets with an eye toward opportunities to integrate online and offline data in a stable and accurate way.**

Audience attributes and behaviors of interest to the committee are those typically provided by (DEPs) in “Big Data Solutions” that are culled from online, digital activity. The committee is interested in all digital environments, platforms and activities, from website visitation to streaming audio or video consumption. This is inclusive of all various platforms and devices, including but not limited to video/audio-enabled computers and laptops, tablets and smartphones. Offline behavior is considered to be any observable activity not involving a digital device.

The committee wishes to explore and understand the various tests that:

1. Are currently being conducted by DEPs to validate the accuracy of DEP audience attributes and behaviors, and
2. Can be compared against known currencies, original fieldwork or other “truth” sets

The committee wishes to arrive at a set of minimal standards that the marketplace can expect and rely upon in determining Big Data validity and a recommendation as to what data “should” be validated in this brave new world of audience measurement.

Ultimately, with an eye toward the programmatic future, the committee hopes to lay the foundation for a model(s) that can be developed to ascribe Big Data attributes and behaviors culled from digital sources to that of their offline counterparts in a given marketplace.

We ask you to propose the best methodology to address these areas. You may address some questions and not others, if you feel that some do not fit your core competencies.

Objectives: There are two basic areas we would like to explore in this study:

- **DATA QUALITY** - General quality and predictability of DEP “audiences” in a given market. What are current methods of validation? What methods can be proposed? Can these methods

be improved upon? What “truth” sets can be explored and accepted by both market researchers and data scientists?

- **DATA LINKAGE** - Degree to which data enrichment applied to online/digital audiences can be ascribed to offline/analog audiences for the same content in the same market. This objective deals largely with the process by which we hope to link digital and offline behaviors.

Specifications: We ask you to propose the best methodology to address the questions above. Some elements we would like to account for and address are below. This is by no means a limitation of what can or should be explored and the committee is open to vendors who are comfortable addressing portions of our specific interests:

- **Validation of DEP Audiences:** As DEP data is culled from a combination of digital behaviors, as well as declared and inferred (modeled) data, these processes of data stitching warrant exploration. Of specific interest to the committee are issues of:
 - a. **Recency** – How does the recency of data collection impact validity of both past and predictive behavior in a defined marketplace over a defined period of time?
 - b. **Stationary v. Modality** – How does the rate at which an attribute or behavior change state impact accuracy? For example, gender doesn’t typically shift, but Employment, Marital Status, Age, Salary, Product Purchase Intent (in-market v. out-of-market) does shift. What can we know about the factors that impact these shifts?
 - c. **Audience Representation:** A goal of this study is to have transparent understanding of data coverage across DEP players in the marketplace to underscore data “blind spots” that can affect validity and predictability against certain target audiences (eg cash vs. credit, over-the-air vs. set-top box, digital divide vs. online user, home owner vs. renter, etc.) For purposes of comparison, we believe a robust, representative panel should be explored as a “truth set” to both validate DEP behaviors in-market and provide linkage to the analog audience. We are open to other suggested “truth sets” and/or longitudinal approaches to validating predictability.
- **“Critical” DEP Audience and Behaviors:** Which audience characteristics and behaviors from DEP providers are best suited to measure and model against in-market content and product consumers? Which variables can be most relied upon? Least? Which are most predictive? Least? Are certain product categories better subjects of study than others?
- **Audio and Video Streaming:** Both audio and video streaming audiences are to be included in this study and compared to their analog counterparts.
- **Non-Traditional Data Sets:** It goes without saying that this study will engage with some non-traditional data sets. To the extent possible, the committee would like to encourage the inclusion of newer data sources for the purposes of illuminating the relative value of these data in modeling future consumer behavior. These data sets can include, but are not limited to, geo-locational data, social data, biometric data, political data and the like.

We are open to and encourage innovative technological solutions and data science methods to capture the various audience behaviors today.

The committee is not predisposed to any market, marketplace, method, DEP, panel or content partner for this effort.

Deliverables and Expectations: Upon completion, we will require a “workshop” call(s) to review and discuss findings and an Executive Summary presentation deck. We will also want an in-depth white paper detailing findings, and for the selected vendor to be available for presentations and discussions of results. We will also require raw data, with the ability to access it by common computer programs.

Proposal Format:

The proposal should contain the following components:

- **Process:** This section should identify the proposed data-gathering methodology and approach.
- **Deliverables:** The proposal should describe the specific processes, and the anticipated approximate length of the report to be delivered.
- **Timing:** The proposal should present milestones expressed in number of weeks after the contract is awarded.
- **Cost:** The budget for this project has not been established. Please provide a specific breakdown of your pricing.
- **Profile:** The Committee is looking for a supplier with experience in media research and the media industry. Supplier must have proven experience working with Data Enrichment Providers. Please provide the following information:
 - Bio/CV/Resume, including recent research in Audio/Radio/Television and the Big Data/Data Enrichment industries.
 - Describe what makes your work especially valuable (it’s OK to brag a little).
 - Two examples of similar work you can share.
 - What aspects of this project would your firm outsource? If you intend to outsource, how would performance and confidentiality be handled?
 - Please provide two references from people for whom you have completed projects or with whom you have worked.

Organizational Profile:

The Council for Research Excellence is funded by Nielsen on behalf of its Clients. Since its founding, the Council has identified some areas that require exploration and has sought proposals from independent researchers, institutions and research companies to design, execute and report the findings of their research. The Council committee charged with addressing media consumption and engagement has authorized this request. To learn more about the Council, please see www.researchexcellence.com.

The Big Data Committee is chaired by Stacey Lynn Schulman, EVP of Strategy, Analytics & Research at Katz Media Group. Recent work from the committee includes a Big Data Primer released to the industry in fall 2014.

The committee will review all submissions and make recommendations to the full Council for final acceptance.

Basis for Award of Contract:

The Council's evaluation will be based on the Supplier's ability to address all issues and questions in the assignment, and other factors such as research design, prior experience, pricing, completeness of proposal, and ability to meet deadlines.

The Council is seeking the highest quality methods, exemplary execution and thought leadership. The proposal should reflect the CRE's commitment to methodological excellence.

The Council reserves the right to select and/or negotiate with one or more of those Suppliers it deems most qualified, reject any or all proposals received, and make an award in whole or in part.

Timetable:

- **Friday, September 11, 2015:** Please let us know if you are interested in submitting a proposal
- **Friday, September 25, 2015:** Proposal Submission Deadline
- **Mid October 2015:** Anticipated Award Date

Proposal Submission

Richard Zackon is the facilitator for the Council for Research Excellence. Submissions should be sent to rfp@researchexcellence.com.

Other terms:

- Following the date at which the Council receives the Supplier's proposal and pricing, that proposal and price shall be binding on the Supplier in all respects for a period of 90 days.
- In submitting a proposal, the Supplier understands that the Council will determine at its sole discretion which proposal, if any, is accepted. The Supplier waives any right to claim damages of any nature whatsoever.
- This RFP defines specific requirements only. It is not intended to be, nor should it be construed as, an offer to contract. The Council will consider each proposal, but is under no obligation to act on any proposal. All submitted proposals shall become the property of the Council.
- Each supplier agrees to absorb all costs incurred in the preparation, revision, and presentation of any proposal.
- When applicable and approved, any travel and lodging will be billed at cost.
- The Council intends to share a public report of findings.

Additional information and clarifications: Please submit all questions to rfp@researchexcellence.com.