

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST FOR PROJECT TO BE INITIATED THROUGH THE COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM STUDIES UNITS (CESU) NETWORK

PROJECT TITLE: Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument Visitor Use Study

Response to this Request for Statements of Interest will be used to identify potential partners for a research project funded by the National Park Service (NPS). This project will be administered through a CESU upon mutual agreement on the application of the CESU Network IDC rate (17.5%). Total funding available for this study is \$52,000.

BACKGROUND

Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument (BICR) was created in 2017 by presidential proclamation to commemorate, preserve, and interpret the dramatic events and struggle for human and civil rights played out in Birmingham in the 1950s and 1960s. BICR contains a collection of buildings and places that stand as a reminder of the violent opposition to integration. These places became a battleground for freedom during nonviolent protests that came to a head in 1963 and directly influenced the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

While extensive visitor use data has been collected prior to the founding of the National Monument in 2017, very little data exist on the virtual visitor use and visitor experience, specifically evaluating app use. Understanding current visitation, experiences, and relationships among associated sites is essential for park planning, specifically considering how to create a seamless visitor experience across various app platforms.

The goals of the project are to gain better understanding on the use of digital applications to assist with trip planning, and the experience of visitors on site. BICR is also interested in exploring opportunities to leverage digital resources collaboratively with its partners to enhance visitor experience and opportunities.

Objectives are to (1) develop descriptive information about visitor types, experiences, and patterns, and (2) assess the use of mobile applications (Apps) in trip planning and on-site experience. The applications the park would like to evaluate are the NPS App (<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/national-park-service/id1549226484>), The Movement App (<https://themovement.edfarm.org>; to be deployed in June 2022), and IdeaSpark (currently under development for MasterCard). Development of surveys for both virtual and on-site assessments is anticipated and may require OMB Programmatic Review Process and clearance.

NOTE: BICR and other NPS staff will have significant involvement with the project to ensure the deliverables meet the park needs and provide any background references, documents, research, and other guidance and logistical support needed to the extent of park capacity. The success of this project will depend on the collaboration of the cooperator and the NPS.

DELIVERABLES

Deliverables shall include: 1) all data, protocols, and survey instruments used in data collection; 2) a report on visitor use types, amounts, patterns, and experience that includes descriptive and evaluative components, as well as associated statistical analyses, and management and planning recommendations; 4) a presentation on the data and results for park staff and partners.

START DATE

August 1, 2022 (Tentative, projected sampling periods are Fall 2022 and Winter 2023)

END DATE

September 30, 2023 (Tentative, an extension of timeline may be possible)

MATERIALS REQUESTED FOR STATEMENT OF INTEREST

Please prepare a 2-3 page summary of your vision for implementing this project. Include your name, department, university or organization, contact information, CESU affiliation, and a brief biographical sketch. Please include the same information for any collaborators, including staff, faculty, or students who would work on the project. Successful applicants will demonstrate expertise in visitor use studies through relevant experience, projects, research, or other examples of their work. We are particularly interested in expertise related to digital visitor assessment and monitoring. Please also describe your approach to evaluate relationships between on-line and on-site experiences to inform management and planning.

REVIEW OF STATEMENTS RECEIVED

All Statements of Interest received will be evaluated by a panel comprising one or more people with expertise related to the park unit or subject matter. Based on a review of Statements of Interest received, an investigator or investigators will be invited to prepare a full study proposal. Statements of Interest will be evaluated based on demonstrated experience and capabilities related to the project requirements.

Please submit Statements of Interest to Giselle Mora-Bourgeois by May 6, 2022, 5:00 PM EST.

PLEASE NOTE: A budget is not requested at this time.

Contact Information

Giselle Mora-Bourgeois
Gulf Coast CESU Coordinator
National Park Service

Email: Giselle_Mora-Bourgeois@nps.gov
Phone: 404-293-4952