



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

National Dementia Workforce Study Nursing Home Staff Survey 12-11-23

RFP Release Date: December 11, 2024 Proposal Due Date: February 19, 2024

Submit Proposals via email to:

ndws-rfps@umich.edu

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1. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

In September 2023, the University of Michigan (U-M) and the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) were awarded funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to conduct the National Dementia Workforce Study (NDWS). The cooperative agreement, funded by the National Institute on Aging (NIA) required that the funded team conduct a competitive process to select organizations to carry out data collection for NDWS (comprising *four* related surveys) over a total of five years. In the current request for proposal (RFP), we invite you [hereafter described as the data collection partner] to submit a proposal to conduct Year 1 and Year 2 data collection on one of those surveys--the **NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey**, as detailed in this memo.

In this RFP you will find the Proposal Invitation and Background Information in which we describe the NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey and the nature of this RFP; Project Scope and Requirements, describing the overall data collection design and study specifications; Project Deliverables, in which we describe specific aspects of the data collection, reporting, and other data deliverables; Proposal Requirements, Evaluation Criteria, and Submission Directions in which we provide information relevant to submitting a proposal and your specific pricing information as well as the criteria against which proposals will be evaluated.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND PROPOSAL INVITATION

For the NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey, the data collection partner will collect data from health care providers working in nursing homes (i.e. licensed nurses and direct care staff) who are part of the professional dementia care workforce and, in the course of their duties, care for nursing home residents living with dementia. Data collection will be carried out using primarily web and paper modes of administration. While the project does not include a formal pilot phase in Year 1, we expect that the Year 1 experience will inform data collection in Year 2 and thereafter (i.e., we anticipate that the Year 1 and Year 2 protocols will differ).

2.1. Background on the University of Michigan

The mission of the University is to serve the people of Michigan and the world through preeminence in creating, communicating, preserving and applying knowledge, art, and academic values, and in developing leaders and citizens who will challenge the present and enrich the future.

For over 70 years, the Survey Research Center (SRC) at the Institute for Social Research (ISR) has been a national and international leader in interdisciplinary social science research involving the collection or analysis or data from scientific sample surveys

Michigan Medicine is comprised of one of the nation's premier health systems and medical schools. The proximity and close relationship between the University Hospitals, Medical School, and other University schools has fostered opportunities for collaboration between clinicians, non-medical faculty, and scientists for more than 100 years.

2.2. Project & Team Description

Led by U-M and UCSF, the NDWS has been launched by a national team of experts, in clinical care of persons living with dementia, survey research, and health workforce research. The goal of the NDWS data infrastructure, which will include surveys plus other linked data sources, is to support research to improve the understanding of the health care workforce that cares for people living with

dementia, through data that researchers and policymakers can use. The core of NDWS will be four surveys that reflect key elements of the professional dementia care workforce in the U.S.:

1) Community Clinicians, 2) Nursing Home Staff, 3) Assisted Living Staff, and 4) Home Care Staff. The concurrent surveys will collect data from those who are paid to care for people living with dementia in all settings, respectively, from outpatient clinics; nursing homes and assisted living communities, especially those with memory care units, and the home setting. By pairing the surveys with additional linked data sources, the NDWS team will create a data infrastructure that will allow researchers and policymakers to ask critical questions related to the care provided to the growing population of persons living with dementia in the U.S.

The NDWS team includes the country's leading dementia care, workforce, and survey researchers as Co-Investigators and Consultants. The project's activities are led by Principal Investigators Donovan Maust, MD, MS, Associate Professor of Psychiatry from the U-M Medical School, and Joanne Spetz, PhD, Director of the Philip R. Lee Institute for Health Policy Studies at UCSF.

Data collection for all four surveys will be directed by James Wagner, PhD, Research Professor from the University of Michigan Survey Research Center. Dr. Wagner will provide overall methodological study direction, oversee the process of identifying organizations to carry out the surveys, and provide management and oversight of the data collection organizations to ensure comprehensive and consistent data definitions and standardization across the four NDWS surveys, including quality control of the data produced. Dr. Wagner will also oversee development of the sampling frame and sample design for the NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey.

The overall aims are to: 1) Launch a family of four nationally representative professional dementia workforce surveys covering the key care delivery settings in the U.S.; 2) Through the National Dementia Workforce Study, build a data infrastructure surrounding the dementia workforce surveys that allows researchers to generate critical insights into the professional dementia care workforce, and associated outcomes for People Living with Dementia (PLWD); and 3) Develop and expand the community of researchers focused on the professional dementia care workforce overall, and that use the National Dementia Workforce Study data infrastructure.

2.3. Proposal Invitation

Data will be collected for each of the four surveys in each of the five project years. The NDWS team will establish subaward agreements with *up to* four data collection organizations willing to work in partnership to launch the four surveys. We will release a separate RFP for each of the four surveys.

This RFP is an invitation for proposals to enter into a subaward agreement with U-M to conduct data collection for the **NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey**, which is intended to be a web-based survey (with mixed-mode non-response followup) of nursing home staff who work in nursing homes, whose residents include people living with dementia. This RFP covers two phases of data collection during the first two project years of the five year project. Year 1 (compressed) is May through August 2024, with Phase 1 data collection July through September; Year 2 is September 2024 through August 2025, with Phase 2 data collection expected to begin January 2025. As explained further below, Phase 1 has a target of 1,100 completed surveys, Phase 2 has a target of 3,300 completed surveys with new respondents, and 880 follow-up surveys from Phase 1. **The deadline for us to receive your proposal is 5:00 PM Eastern time on February 19, 2024.** Response to this RFP confirms an understanding that this is not a contract or offer of business by the University. In the future, we will post an RFP for Years 3-5 of the Nursing Home Staff Survey.

2.4. Selection of an Organization

The purpose of this RFP is to allow U-M and UCSF to select a data collection partner for the NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey no later than April 2024, with the intention of beginning collaboration as soon as possible after the subaward is issued, and beginning data collection no later than July 2024. The final selection will be made by the NDWS Core Leadership Team, with input from NIA program and scientific staff. Funds will come from the U-M and will be in the form of a subaward subject to the terms and conditions of the prime award from the NIH.

2.5. Confidentiality of Your Proposal

Proposals under review will be held in confidence and shared only with our collaborators on the NDWS project. If you would like us to sign a non-disclosure agreement before receiving your bid, please provide one as early as possible, making allowances for the need for review by University of Michigan counsel. If we select a proposal from among those we receive, the chosen proposal will be provided to NIH.

2.6. Exemption from liability

The University is not liable in any manner or to any extent for any cost or expense incurred by the data collection organization in the preparation, submission, presentation or any other action connected with proposing or otherwise responding to this RFP. Such exemption from liability applies whether such costs are incurred directly by the data collection organization or indirectly through the organization's agents, employees, assigns or others, whether related or not to the organization.

3. PROJECT SCOPE AND REQUIREMENTS

For the NDWS Nursing Home Staff Survey, the data collection partner will collect data from licensed nurses and direct care staff who work in nursing homes and who care for residents living with dementia. The partner will collect survey data primarily via an online self-completion instrument with the option of seeking responses via a hardcopy paper version. There will be variations between the Year 1 and Year 2 protocols, as the project does not include a pilot, and we expect the Year 1 experience to inform data collection in subsequent years.

3.1. Sampling, Facility Recruitment, and Rostering

The Nursing Home Staff Survey will use a two-stage design in which we select nursing home facilities in stage one and staff from within each facility in stage two. The NDWS team will provide the data collection partner with the list of sampled facilities for each phase of the study. The partner will be responsible for contacting nursing homes and explaining the study purpose and protocols. We propose that data collection partners engage potential participating nursing homes through multiple contact and follow-up modalities, which may include mail, email, text, telephone, and video conference call (e.g., Zoom). Data collection partners will ask facilities to provide lists of NDWS-eligible staff, consisting of registered nurses, licensed practical/vocational nurses, nursing assistants and other direct care staff, from which to select a stratified random sample of staff members to participate in the Nursing Home Staff Survey. The NDWS team will work collaboratively with the data collection partner to develop the rostering tool and selection protocol. The partner will be responsible for administering the rostering and selection protocol, and working with each facility to secure contact information for the selected sample members. The collaborating partner should propose creative implementation strategies for facilities that are reluctant to provide contact information for their staff members. We expect the data collection partner to recruit approximately 100 participating nursing homes in Year 1 and 300 participating nursing homes in Year 2. From each

responding facility, the data collection partner will select a stratified random sample of staff members, designed to yield, on average, 11 respondents per facility.

The data collection partner will work with each participating facility to identify someone in a leadership position (e.g., nursing home administrator, director of nursing, director of staff development) to complete an organizational questionnaire. This may be the same individual who provides the staff list and rostering information at the recruitment phase. The data collection partner should budget \$500 per *facility* as a token of appreciation for participating in the study and responding to the organizational questionnaire.

3.2. Nursing Home Survey Data Collection

Using the sample of respondents selected from each facility to participate in the survey, the data collection partner will administer a web-based self-completion survey of staff in the facility who provide care to residents living with dementia. The partner will be responsible for all aspects of data collection and non-response follow up, using both printed and electronic approaches, including invitations, questionnaire deployment, and reminder phone calls, letters, texts, and postcards intended to optimize survey response. Partners are encouraged to recommend successful recruitment strategies, which may include collaboration with facility administration, but, in general, procedures are expected to include up to 5 mailed invitation/information letters and 5 postcard reminders.

For purposes of estimating costs, data collection partners should use the following assumptions (also summarized in Table 1 below): In Year 1, the data collection partner should plan to recruit 100 facilities from a sample of 200, and then invite 1,375 staff members to collect approximately 1,100 completed baseline surveys from staff in 100 facilities (average ~11 surveys per facility). In Year 2, the partner should plan to recruit 300 facilities from a sample of 600, and then invite 4,125 staff members to collect approximately 3,300 baseline surveys from staff in 300 newly selected nursing home facilities. In addition, Year 2 data collection will include follow-up survey invitations with approximately 1,100 of the Year 1 respondents, with a goal of 880 completed surveys. These figures reflect our expectation that partners will target at least a 40% response rate (accounting for a 50% response rate from nursing homes and an 80% response rate from baseline survey respondents). We are targeting an 80% response rate from follow-up survey respondents.

The data collection partner should budget \$100 per participating respondent as a token of appreciation for both the baseline and follow-up surveys. As needed, the partner will recruit, hire, and train interviewers to carry out reminder calling, encouraging respondents to participate in the web survey or offering to send a hard copy questionnaire.

Table 1	I. Survey	Completion	Goals and	Incentives
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Project Year	Recruited	Completed	Completed
	Nursing Homes	Baseline Surveys	Follow-up Surveys
Year 1	100 (Sample = 200)	1,100 (Sample = 1,375)	-
Year 2	300	3,300	880
	(Sample = 600)	(Sample = 4,125)	(Sample = 1,100)
Tokens of appreciation	\$500/facility	\$100/respondent	\$100/respondent

In addition to your cost estimate based on our stated response rate assumptions, if you have research or experience that would suggest *different* response rates or incentive structures please include your recommendations including alternate budget estimates.

The data collection partner is encouraged to propose experiments designed to identify the optimal recruitment protocol for the study population. The partner should expect to work collaboratively with the NDWS team to refine and implement new experiments or protocol changes throughout the production period, but in particular during early stages of data collection.

Year 1 data collection will launch quickly in order to provide time to evaluate and inform refinements to the materials prior to the Year 2 launch. It is important that the data collection partner has the ability to respond efficiently to changes in protocol driven by the Year 1 experience and outcomes.

Table 2. Project and Data Collection Milestones

Event	Dates / Details	
Year 1 Project start (4 months only)	May 1, 2024	
Year 1 Data collection launch	July 31, 2024	
Year 1 Preliminary data release	September 30, 2024	
Year 2 Project start (12 months)	September 1, 2024	
Year 2 Data collection launch	January 15, 2025	
Year 1 Final data release	January 31, 2025	
Year 2 Final data release	August 31, 2025	

3.3. Instrument Development

The NDWS team will provide the data collection partner with the final content of the survey questionnaires, including variable naming and response choice formats. The data collection partner will program and test the following web-based instruments:

- A 15-minute facility questionnaire in English only
- A 25-minute respondent baseline questionnaire in English and Spanish
- A 20-minute respondent follow-up questionnaire in English and Spanish

All respondent questionnaires will need to link to the facility from which the respondent was selected. We expect respondent follow up questionnaires to have similar content to the baseline questionnaire and to include preload (data carried forward) from the earlier survey. The data collection partner will also format, print, and duplicate hard copy paper questionnaires for the respondent baseline and follow-up questionnaires in English and Spanish. Costs for translation of all survey materials into Spanish should be included in your estimate.

After the Year 1 data collection, the NDWS team may choose to conduct data collection in additional languages such as Tagalog, Russian, French Creole, or Mandarin. In your proposal, please comment on your capacity for accommodating additional languages in data collection, programming, and support. You do not need to provide these costs in your estimate.

3.4. Technical Systems Requirements and Support

The data collection partner will be responsible for providing primary data collection, sample management and data management software, systems, and infrastructure adequate for fulfilling the study objectives. These will likely include:

Web survey programming, testing, and hosting

- Tool(s) for programming web surveys designed for desktop and mobile completion, with respondents able to choose either English or Spanish language
- Tools and/or processes for testing and debugging web survey instruments, including testing by members of the NDWS project team
- Systems and infrastructure adequate for reliably hosting: screening, rostering, survey authentication and web survey data collection with minimal downtime and minimal lag time between questions

Sample, survey, and data management systems and reporting

- Systems to import, capture, monitor and update facility and case-level information including contact details, contact history, and completion status
- Systems or processes for designing, printing, mailing, and managing mail-based data collection
- Systems or processes for capturing or entering mail-based survey responses
- Tools or systems for sending template-based or ad hoc emails or text messages to survey participants
- Tools or systems for managing telephone-based contact with survey participants
- Tools or systems necessary for reporting on data collection progress and production

Help desk support

• Please plan to provide an email address and a staffed, toll-free phone number that will be available for respondents throughout the field period. Staff answering emails and phone calls will need to be able to answer routine questions, provide technical support to respondents having difficulty with the web survey, record concerns, and log all calls. Staff answering emails and phone calls should be able to respond to queries in English and Spanish. Those answering calls will *not* need to answer challenging questions; but can instead refer these to the NDWS team.

Security

Documented infrastructure, systems, development approaches and data management processes
that prioritize participant privacy and confidentiality, and insure the integrity and protection of all
survey data, including the personally identifiable information (PII) of survey participants during
all stages of this study.

4. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables will be required from the data collection partner:

- 4.1. **Frequent telephone/Zoom conferences** The NDWS team looks forward to a collaborative relationship, working very closely with the data collection partner to perform this work. Before and during data collection we expect that NDWS personnel will confer at least weekly with your staff.
- 4.2. **Weekly production reports** During data collection, plan to provide weekly reports on the status of survey completion for all sample members. Reports should summarize the dispositions of the sample cumulatively and by week at the facility and individual level. This includes information on all steps in the contact protocol including telephone calls, email and text communication, mailings, and returns so that we can continuously monitor our progress.
- 4.3. **Financial reports** Plan to provide detailed expense reports at least every month, or more frequently if requested. These reports should include expended costs to date, as well as updated cost-at-completion estimates.
- 4.4. **Data collection instruments** Plan to provide us access to the programmed instruments with adequate time for testing before fielding, and to deliver the final electronic version of the web programming code in each language for our archives.
- 4.5. **Paper instruments** Plan to deliver the formatted paper questionnaires for the respondent baseline and follow-up surveys in each language.
- 4.6. **Interviewer and staff training materials** Plan to deliver interviewer training material for us to review before training takes place. This includes training materials related to facility recruitment, rostering, reminder calling or texting, or any other aspect of data collection.
- 4.7. **Comprehensive data files -** Periodically throughout data collection, and promptly thereafter, plan to deliver exhaustive data files.
 - *Survey data*. Closed question item responses from the facility and respondent questionnaires, from complete and partial interviews. Responses to open-ended questions delivered as text fields with sample IDs for linking.
 - Sample data. Partner will deliver facility lists, rosters, and selected sample members to the NDWS team after selection. This will include the complete addresses and other contact information (such as current and past names, addresses, email addresses, telephone numbers, or other information) provided by the nursing home facilities. Results of any attempts to update contact information should also be included.
 - Production-related paradata. Date and status of every mail piece sent and/or returned; date and status of telephone calls (including dates, times, dispositions, and any notes from all inbound or outbound call attempts); web login records (including IP addresses, user-agent strings, dates and times of every login, and resulting dispositions).
 - *Survey paradata/metadata*. Questionnaire metadata and administrative data (such as survey duration, date, time, question item times, and preloaded values).
 - Format. The NDWS team will work with data collection partners to establish formatting and variable naming conventions. This is critical because of the multiple collaborators involved in the NDWS project. We ask that partners deliver case-level records, one row per sample unit, with labeled variables and values, and coded missing values that distinguish programmed skips from item nonresponse, unit nonresponse, or other types.
 - Frequency and delivery mechanism. Frequency of delivery will vary by data file type, but will be no more frequent than weekly. Data delivery mechanism will likely be via Secure

File Transfer Protocol (SFTP) and will include 2-factor authentication before initiating SFTP login.

4.8. **Technical report**. Plan to provide a technical report that documents the recruitment and data collection procedures, and other methods used to produce the data.

5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

We ask that you provide the following in your proposal.

- 5.1. A statement acknowledging your understanding of the scope of this RFP and a comprehensive solution to achieve the objectives listed above in *Section 3. Project Scope and Requirements*.
- 5.2. A comprehensive cost estimate that includes your *total* costs (including indirects and/or fees), and outlines costs of all proposed design, data collection, and support services including all salary and non-salary costs incurred, as well as all assumptions.
- 5.3. Marginal cost per successfully recruited nursing home and marginal cost per completed survey: if we adjust the complete survey counts moderately upward (or downward) from those proposed, what are the marginal costs (or savings) per facility and per baseline web sample case?
- 5.4. A named "co-investigator" from your organization who will be responsible for senior level oversight of the work carried out by your organization in fulfilling the requirements outlined in this RFP.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The NDWS team will evaluate proposals based on the most competitive offer considering the quality of products and services offered, cost, and responsiveness to the RFP requirements. We request that you address the following criteria explicitly in your proposal:

- 6.1. Cost Clarity and competitiveness of costs and ability to control costs and stay within budget
- 6.2. **Quality** Ability to meet or exceed the quality specifications for the study, particularly the number of interviews, response rate, and minimizing non-response
- 6.3. **Past performance** Prior experience fielding large, complex survey data collections with multiple modes of contact and data collection; demonstrated expertise in the recruitment of establishments (i.e., facilities) and employees.
- 6.4. Key personnel We are interested in the qualifications and experience of key personnel who would carry out this work including the co-investigator, operational personnel assigned to lead the project and the senior statistician and/or methodologist who will collaborate on behalf of your organization.

6.5. Operational capabilities

Collaboration. Willingness to collaborate closely with U-M, UCSF, and other academic and
research organizations involved in the NDWS project. We anticipate working very closely
with the selected organization during the design and implementation stages of each phase of

- data collection. We anticipate frequent communication on day-to-day operational matters and a collaborative approach to trouble-shooting.
- *Technical systems*. Ability for proposed infrastructure, systems, and processes to meet the protocol requirements, including the capabilities and flexibility of web interviewing and sample management system software.
- Web-interviewing system downtime. Please comment on expectations regarding frequency and duration of downtime that might affect respondent participation and your organization's ability to respond.
- Data Processing. Please describe how the various types of deliverable data may be
 organized and your procedures for integrating the data from various sources. Please
 comment on your flexibility in this area, as it will be important to work with the NDWS and
 among collaborators, to assure consistent formatting of survey data across NDWS
 components.
- *Timely Data Delivery*. This project will have frequent and firm deadlines for data delivery. Please comment on your ability to deliver clean data files during and immediately after data collection.
- Security. A clear description of the organizational processes and infrastructure that will insure the integrity and protection of survey data including the personally identifiable information (PII) of survey participants during all stages of this study.
- Mail. This project may involve mailing thousands of letters, reminder postcards, and hard copy questionnaires, and tracking the status of mailing for every address and person, including records of all mail returned as completed surveys or undeliverable. Please describe your experience and methods for handling and tracking this volume of mail.
- *Incentive processing*. Please describe your experience and proposed methods for administration of facility level and respondent level tokens of appreciation.
- *Field Reports*. The selected organization must be able to deliver timely reports on production and costs.
- 6.6. **Experimentation and Innovation -** We encourage your ideas on how to improve upon the methods described here by adding state-of-the-art innovations, proposing experiments, or improving cost efficiencies. If you propose an experiment or a revision to the specification, please clearly identify the change and provide supporting rationale. If your proposed revision has cost implications, please itemize the amount so that we can better compare the core components of your bid against others received.
- 6.7. **Adaptability** Adverse developments such as a pandemic, lower-than expected response rates, or indications of non-response bias while we are in the field cannot change the total funding available but may necessitate swift changes in the study's implementation. The ability to adapt to changing circumstances or difficulties in recruitment is therefore important.
- 6.8. **Transparency** We need complete access to all data and products resulting from the study, including sample, administrative, and interview variables. We understand that most data collection organizations rely on some proprietary methods, documents, software, and other materials or technology. However, as a publicly funded project committed to scientific transparency, NDWS prefers that every procedure we follow be documented and publicly disclosed. Let us know the extent to which your proposal relies on proprietary methods.

7. SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

7.1. Proposal Questions and Intent to Submit

We are happy to answer your questions if you submit them by email. To ensure fairness in the competition we will *not* be able to respond privately to questions concerning the bid or bidding process. Rather, we will gather questions and answer them in communications sent to all organizations that have indicated an interest in bidding. If you have questions, please send them as early as possible and no later than January 12, 2024. We will prepare a memo that will anonymously list questions received and our responses, and we will update the memo cumulatively and share it with prospective bidders no later than January 26, 2024; all prospective bidders will see all questions and answers but will not see who asked them. Although it is not required, if you plan to submit a proposal, please let us know so that we can send you copies of the questions and answers. We will also post questions and answers on the NDWS website at <u>ummentalhealth.info/ndws/</u>. (Note: At this time, NDWS.org redirects to <u>ummentalhealth.info/ndws/</u> while the official NDWS.org website is being completed.)

7.2. Possible Video Conference

We may ask to have a video conference with key members of your team in the week of March 4, 2024, to ask questions and seek clarifications regarding your proposal. Please be prepared to give a 15-20 minute overview of your proposal in this meeting.

7.3. Proposal Format

Please provide your proposal as a PDF file. The main text of your proposal may be up to 20 single-spaced pages. You may provide any appendices you wish, such as detailed budget information, resumes or CVs of principal staff, examples of case management reports, and other helpful materials that we may consult selectively. Appendices do not count against the page limit.

Please present budgets for Year 1 (May 1 – August 31, 2024) and Year 2 (September 1, 2024 – August 31, 2025) itemized by job title and separating salary from non-salary costs. If you include any experimental activities or other enhancements to the proposed protocol, please present the marginal costs for those activities and specify whether or not they are included in the total budget presented.

7.4. Proposal Submission and Review Timeline

Table 3. Proposal Submission and Review Timeline

Proposal Submission Milestones	Dates / Details
RFP Issue Date	December 11, 2023
Submission of Written Questions from Supplier	January 12, 2024
Submission of Intent to Respond (optional)	January 22, 2024
Written Question Response from UM	January 26, 2024
Proposal Due Date	February 19, 2024
Possible video conference	March 4-5, 2024
Selection of data collection partner	March 15, 2024
Project Start	May 1, 2024

The University reserves the right to change this schedule as needed. All information provided by the University in this RFP is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. The University makes no certification that any item is without error.

The deadline for submitting a proposal is 5:00 pm Eastern time (2pm Pacific) on Friday, February 19, 2024. This deadline is necessitated by the evaluation procedure and the NIH requirement to launch data collection, and release data within the first year of the project. Proposals should be delivered by email. Please email proposals and questions to Piotr Dworak and Gregg Peterson at ndws-rfps@umich.edu. If you do not receive an acknowledgment of your proposal or question by noon the following business day, please call Gregg Peterson at 734-377-7932. Thank you for considering our proposal invitation. We very much look forward to hearing from you.