Life Cycle of an RFP
When putting out an RFP call

YOUR POTENTIAL PROCESS

1. Creating
You’re coming up with ideas, defining your brand’s marketing and advertising needs, and brainstorming creative ways to address them.

2. Planning
You’re building your team, nailing down your RFP requirements, and hashing out your project scope.

RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

- [What the Data Says white paper](#), to delve deeply into market trends and understand consumers’ expectations
- [The New Mainstream training deck](#), to learn about the identities, communities, and buying power of diverse consumer segments
- [Yes, And framework](#), to raise questions that deepen your approach to thoughtful marketing from the get-go
- [The marketing glossary](#), to familiarize yourself with industry language rooted in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- [Comms in Context](#), to practice applying Language, Please principles to your copy and orient new team members to your approach
- [10 Mindful Actions tip sheet](#), to make sure a DEI lens guides your decision-making as early as possible in the process
- [Yes, And](#), to help you refine your questions, requirements, and scope
- [New Mainstream deck](#), to inform your budget and resource allocation
3. Drafting
You’re crafting the RFP, incorporating your must-haves vs. nice-to-haves, and polishing with the help of key team members.

- **What the Data Says**, to provide support for the requirements and criteria you are outlining
- **Yes, And**, to inspire your writing and encourage deep thinking about your goals, informing potential partners of how your brand understands your diverse audiences
- **Marketing glossary** (and the **style guidance sections**), to ensure the language of your RFP resonates with your brand’s values
- **Comms in Context**, for interactive examples of writing with a DEI lens

4. Reviewing
You’re double- and triple-checking your materials to ensure everything aligns with your brand’s values, goals, and legal requirements.

- **10 Mindful Actions**, to make sure your RFP sets up your potential partners for success with an ask that clearly illustrates your commitment to brand values
- **What the Data Says**, to confirm that your asks are backed by solid consumer data and insights

5. Distributing
You have identified your potential partners, sent out the RFP, and begun answering initial questions.

- **What the Data Says**, to support discussions around the deep significance of using a DEI lens in your programs or campaigns
- **Yes, And**, as a handy framework for answering any questions about the DEI-focused aspects of your RFP
6. Evaluating
Proposals are in. You are evaluating, scoring, and selecting your perfect partner.

Anytime
You’re looking to authentically engage a diverse audience and thoughtfully integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts into your campaigns and programs.

- **New Mainstream deck**, to examine how well your potential partners understand and cater to diverse consumer segments
- **Yes, And**, to evaluate and score your proposals thoroughly
- **10 Mindful Actions**, to determine whether the proposed strategies and approach align with foundational DEI actions
- **What the Data Says**, to understand what consumers really want from your inclusive marketing efforts
- **New Mainstream deck**, to familiarize yourself with the buying power of the new majority
- **Yes, And**, to ignite your brand’s commitment to going beyond the surface in marketing to diverse audience segments
- **Comms in Context**, to make sure your language and messaging align with your commitment to brand values
- **Marketing glossary**, to stay up to date on marketing concepts and terms that support a DEI lens in marketing
When answering an RFP call

YOUR POTENTIAL PROCESS

1. Nurturing/Prospecting/Pitching
You are building and nurturing relationships with potential partner brands.

2. Responding/Planning
You see an RFP that aligns with your brand and capabilities; your team jumps right into digesting the RFP’s criteria and goals.

RESOURCES TO CHECK OUT

- **What the Data Says**, to show your expertise in tracking market trends and a keen understanding of consumers’ expectations
- **New Mainstream deck**, to equip yourself with the data needed to make a strong case for communicating with segments from historically underrepresented groups
- **Yes, And**, for questions to dig deep into your potential partner brand needs and approach
- **Marketing glossary**, to elevate your understanding of the industry’s evolution toward engaging audiences from more diverse groups, showcasing your capacity to resonate with them
- **Comms in Context**, to speak to the importance of language that truly connects with your partner brand’s potential audiences
- **Yes, And**, for questions to jump-start your team’s capacity to approach the RFP and incorporate a DEI lens into your response
- **Marketing glossary**, to ensure you accurately interpret the RFP’s terminology and cultivate a shared language with the potential client as early as possible in the process
3. Brainstorming
You are throwing around ideas with your team, getting clear on your proposed theme and approach.

4. Querying
You’ve got questions, and you’re reaching out to the client for clarity or deeper insights.

- **What the Data Says**, to ground your brainstorming in solid insights about consumers’ expectations
- **10 Mindful Actions**, to get on the same page as a team on the foundational DEI steps your RFP response should incorporate
- **New Mainstream deck**, to help you develop a theme and approach that explores fresh and untapped opportunities for your client
- **Yes, And**, to foster deep, creative thinking, setting up your team for an approach that genuinely resonates with your client’s target audience

- **What the Data Says**, to center your discussion on consumers’ wants when you need to advocate for a particular approach and educate your client
- **Yes, And**, to help you get thoughtful about the questions you want to ask and frame them in a way that clarifies your clients’ points and moves the conversation forward
- **10 Mindful Actions**, to make sure that your understanding of DEI marketing principles aligns with your client’s
5. Drafting
You’re crafting the RFP’s proposal, giving and getting feedback from the team’s key players.

- Comms in Context, to prime your writer’s eye for crafting copy that reflects a DEI lens
- What the Data Says, to support your response when advocating for the application of a DEI lens to your client’s program
- Marketing glossary (and style guidance sections), to use clear and precise language throughout your response

6. Revising
You’ve submitted your proposal; you may even have presented it. Now, based on the client’s feedback or your team’s new ideas, you’re fine-tuning the proposal.

- 10 Mindful Actions, to make sure your response reflects core elements of the values you or your partners consider key
- Yes, And, to thoroughly examine your proposal for depth and nuance, ensuring your response offers an authentic and meaningful way to connect with your client’s target audiences from diverse groups

7. Reflecting
The decision is in. Win or lose, you’re gathering the team to talk takeaways and next steps.

- What the Data Says, to reflect on consumers’ expectations and how these may be reflected in future proposals
- Yes, And, to guide your briefing session either with an eye for teasing out exactly what worked if you won the RFP or to identify the opportunities for growth if you didn’t
Anytime

You’re looking to stand at the forefront of marketing and offer bold, creative solutions grounded in authenticity and a nuanced understanding of the new mainstream. You want to do all this while advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion values during the RFP process.

• **What the Data Says**, to keep consumers’ expectations and sentiments about DEI top of mind at all times

• **New Mainstream deck**, to understand and spread the word about what will help brands thrive in the long term

• **Yes, And**, to inspire you to consistently take a proactive and brave approach to marketing to diverse audiences

• **Comms in Context**, to hone your sensibilities for crafting communications that are inclusive, respectful, and accessible to your segments

• **Marketing glossary**, to transform the way marketing relates to and speaks about DEI

• **10 Mindful Actions**, whenever you need to remind yourself or others of the foundations of DEI marketing