

## Guide to Writing Compelling Non-Confidential Proposals in Response to NineSigma Requests

### INTRODUCTION

NineSigma publishes a variety of projects, including Requests for Proposals (RFPs), Gallery Needs, Innovation Contests and Grand Challenges, to connect our clients with experts and technologies that address their needs. Your written response to a NineSigma project is your opportunity to highlight your unique capability to address the client's needs in a brief but clear, concise, and compelling proposal. For the protection of both your interests and those of our client, we require that you submit **only non-confidential** information in your proposal.

This guide, focused on RFP & Gallery responses, will help you prepare a strong, non-confidential proposal that more effectively attracts our client's interest. Innovation Contests and Grand Challenges will have their own criteria and specifications for responses.

Our client will compare proposals on a competitive basis and choose to contact and negotiate with respondents who **most effectively address the client's needs** as described on the project page.

Unlike a grant proposal, where you are judged on your technology alone and the financial terms are fixed, NineSigma's clients will be evaluating your response based on feasibility in three areas:

1. **Technical feasibility** – Is the proposal scientifically viable and does it meet the technical specifications requested?
2. **Commercial feasibility** – Will the proposed technology meet the client's business/product needs?
3. **Relationship feasibility** – Can the client and solution provider work together?

### 1. TECHNICAL APPROACH

When describing your solution in a non-confidential way, focus on describing **what your technology does, not how it works**. A general description or classification of your approach, without revealing the technical details, provides enough information in your initial proposal. In addition, consider the following suggestions:

- Can you currently meet all the criteria in the Request? If yes, be specific.
- If no, outline the additional resources needed to develop a solution that meets all criteria
- Emphasize the advantages of your technology compared to other existing technologies in the field
- Describe the maturity of your technology (e.g. concept only, lab scale testing, pilot scale prototyping, commercially available)
- Include supporting data, diagrams, and/or pictures to illustrate and validate a concept or technology
- Upload supplemental files, such as product brochures. If you have media clips, please provide a link to the file (no video files, please, unless otherwise stated).

**Q: Is there a form or template that I can use?**

A: While some of NineSigma's projects do require the usage of a Response Template, most do not. Those projects that do use a Response Template will offer the document on the project page. If there is no Response Template, please use the online response form to describe your technology or expertise.

Ideally, our clients are looking for your interest and demonstrated expertise in the form of a two-to-three page written summary. NineSigma's clients tend not to select proposals that direct the client to "look at my website" or "look at my CV", or that claim that the respondent can "invent anything" without providing examples or evidence.

## 2. COMMERCIAL FEASIBILITY

Whereas the goal of a grant proposal is to obtain funding for long-term basic research projects, NineSigma's clients seek answers to targeted needs. Therefore, we encourage you to highlight how your approach applies to the stated business need of the project. If your technology is still under development, **include your proposed approach to achieving a proof of concept, including an estimated budget and timeline if possible, for a specific deliverable.** If your budget or timeline aren't known or are subject to change, please indicate that in your response.

If you have a ready product, be as specific as possible in describing how your product is currently used in the marketplace and how you envision collaboration with our client. Furthermore, please be sure to describe your current intellectual property status when possible, as well as your preferences for the proposed relationship with NineSigma's client.

## 3. RELATIONSHIP FEASIBILITY

Finally, our client will evaluate the compatibility between the two parties. The following are suggested ways to describe the unique qualities that would make you an ideal partner:

- Include a brief summary of your team and organization(s)
- Highlight a few recent achievements or past projects that are relevant to the RFP
- Emphasize your capabilities and experience, especially if you are not comfortable providing details of your technical approach, or if your approach lacks significant supporting data

**Your capabilities and examples of successful product development experience will give the client insight into how you might work together.**

## HOW NINESIGMA PRESENTS YOUR PROPOSAL

NineSigma will screen all proposals for confidential information as well as relevance to the stated goals of the project. In addition, we present organized summaries of your capabilities as they compare to the client's evaluation criteria. The proposals that **most explicitly meet the greatest number of RFP criteria** typically rise to the top. Ultimately, the client selects the respondents of greatest interest for further discussions.

## CONCLUSION

Submitting your non-confidential proposal in response to a NineSigma RFP gives you the opportunity to present your technology to decision makers at some of the world's largest and most successful companies. We are here to help you prepare the best possible proposal, so please contact us if you need assistance.

***Q: Does NineSigma have a sample of a great proposal that I can review?***

***A: Sorry, we do not. Because every Request and client is different, there is no "ideal" proposal. In addition, we only show the proposals we receive to the client who sponsored the Request.***

***Q: Who can I contact if I have questions?***

***A: NineSigma has a Solution Provider Help Desk to answer your questions. The Help Desk can answer general questions, assist with account concerns and can let you know if a deadline extension is available.***

***Our Help Desk can also connect you to the Request Manager for additional guidance regarding the Request or your proposal.***

***Email: [phd@ninesigma.com](mailto:phd@ninesigma.com)***