



## Request for Qualifications for Design Services

**Project:** Morehead Welcome Plaza and Outdoor Pavilion  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

**Distributed:** 10/09/2024

**Closing Date:** 11/06/2024 @ 3pm

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The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) is soliciting submittals from firms interested in providing design services for the Morehead Planetarium and Science Center (“Morehead”) Welcome Plaza and Outdoor Pavilion project.

### I. Project Description and Schedule

Morehead has been a beloved fixture for both the UNC-CH campus and the state of North Carolina for over 75 years. Annually, it welcomes thousands of school-age children from across the state. They visit to experience and discover fundamental scientific concepts through hands-on programs, live demonstrations, and one of the largest planetarium domes in the southeast. For many of these students, Morehead is their first experience on a college campus, potentially inspiring a pathway for future Tar Heels. Morehead is also known as “the gateway” to current science on the UNC campus. Researchers from a variety of disciplines collaborate with Morehead to create exhibits, programs, planetarium shows—one-of-a-kind learning opportunities—that make science, technology, mathematics, engineering, and the arts exciting and relevant for visitors of all ages.

While Morehead is seen as a jewel within the UNC community, its historical structure puts limitations on the organization’s growing audience and mission. The University is looking to further support Morehead’s work through redeveloping two discrete, but interconnected spaces around the building. Below is a brief description of existing conditions in each area as well as a brief outline of respective design goals.

#### ***Welcome Plaza***

The north side of Morehead is the primary entry and staging area for the busloads of children and visitors who visit the building daily. As currently designed, the space is inadequate: circulation is poor, the space is congested, and there is no sense of arrival or placemaking. Furthermore, the existing roadway and parking lot design creates significant conflicts between pedestrians, school/activity buses, and University permit/hourly visitor parking. The iconic Sundial located at the center of the parking lot is physically separated from this entry area, yet dangerously draws visitors across traffic to access the space.

#### Design Goals

- Create a safe, welcoming physical environment for students and visitors that portrays Morehead’s mission and vision
- Produce a plaza design that enhances and supports student/visitor queuing, and circulation while also providing stand-alone passive and/or active programming
- Develop design that reduces conflicts between pedestrians and vehicle traffic
- Spatially and programmatically reconnect the Sundial space to the Welcome Plaza and Morehead

#### ***Outdoor Pavilion***

Despite the expressed need for more internal programming space, significant expansion/renovation of Morehead is not feasible. As a result, Morehead has identified a site on the south side of the building suitable for the construction of an unconditioned, covered classroom space. Currently this area is used for a variety of different programs including Grounds storage and the temporary location of a tented structure used primarily by Morehead for student and group outdoor activities. There is significant grade change across the site as well as active subgrade utility systems.

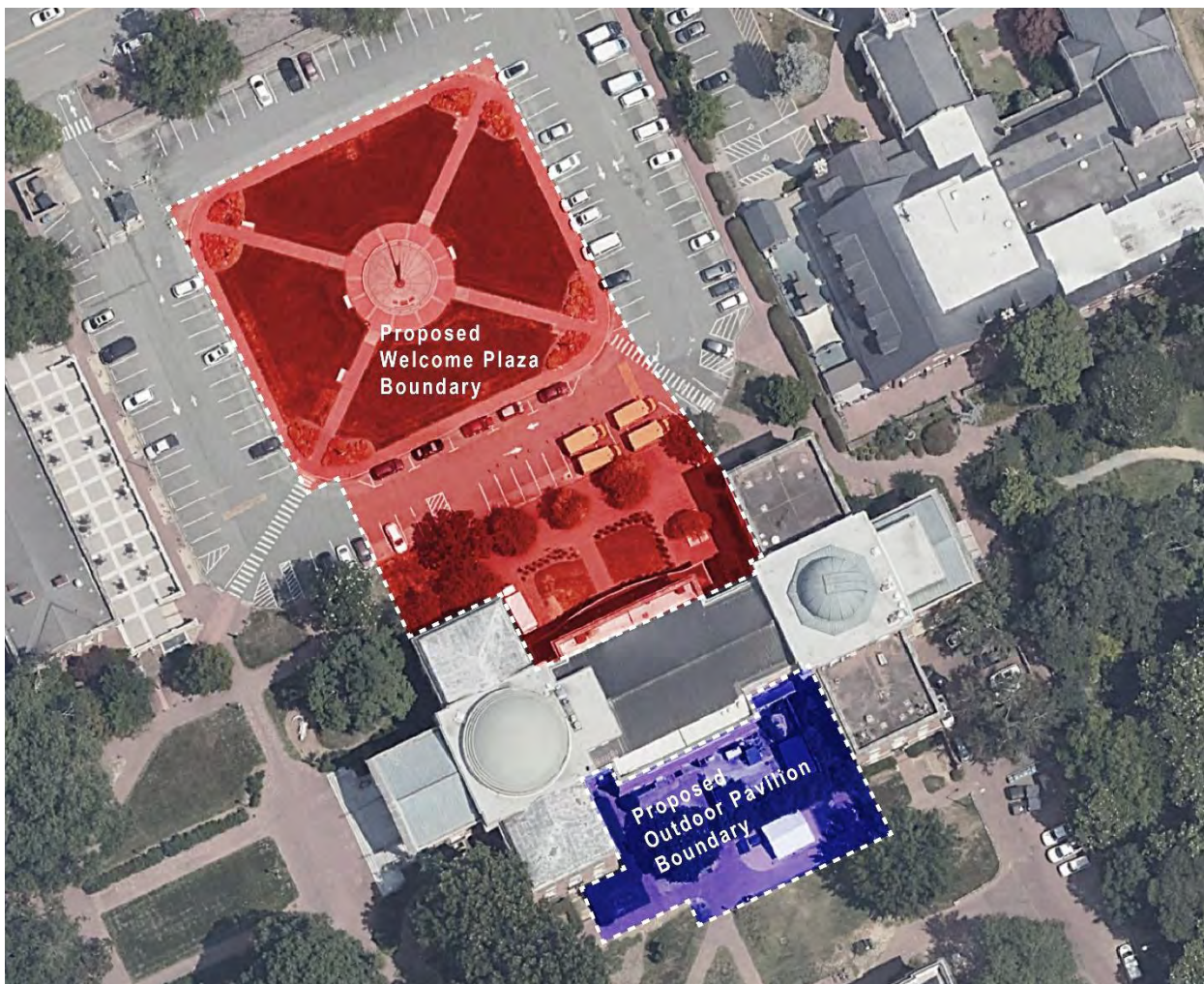


The space would receive year-round use by Summer Science Camp, school groups, general visitors (Launch Lab adjacency for program expansion), rentals, (weddings, birthdays, university events) and Morehead staff among others. There is potential for a shared space opportunity with the Morehead Cain Foundation, who have expressed interest in planning involvement. Given the proposed site's location on the historic campus, significant thought will need to be given to how the structure integrates into the existing architectural fabric and as well as adjacent landscape and circulation systems.

### Design Goals

- Design a permanent structure that supports, enhances, and expands Morehead programming
- Create a flexible, multi-purpose space that can accommodate at least 100 people
- Create a beautiful, unique outdoor space that portrays Morehead mission and vision

This project has received funding for preliminary design (through DD). A construction budget and a total project budget will be set during this initial scope of work. A selection committee has been established and will make a recommendation to the UNC-CH Board of Trustees. Following Board approval, the selected team will submit a fee proposal for Advance Planning services. It is the intent of UNC-CH to continue with full design services with the selected design team once full project funding has been approved.





The anticipated designer selection schedule is shown below:

<b>Designer Selection Schedule</b>	<b>Estimated Dates</b>
Advertise RFQ	10/09/2024
Pre-submission Meeting (Zoom) @ 1pm	10/16/2024
Pre-submission Questions (Deadline @3pm)	10/23/2024
Submittals Due to UNC (Deadline @ 3pm)	11/06/2024
Designer Shortlist Notification	11/13/2024
Interviews (In-person; specific time TBD)	12/04/2024
Board of Trustees Approval	Late January 2025
Project Kick-Off	March 2025

## **II. Existing Strategic Plan, Master Plans and Design Guidelines**

To inform future decision-making, a conceptual study was completed in July 2023 for both the Welcome Plaza and Outdoor Pavilion. Though not beholden to this document, it is expected that any design effort will use that work as a foundational starting point for their work. If you would like access to this report, please reach out to the project manager (Daniel Widis - [widis@unc.edu](mailto:widis@unc.edu)).

The [Campus Master Plan](#), Campus Landscape Framework Plan, and [University Design Guidelines](#) will be guiding documents for the design of this project. For access to the Campus Landscape Framework Plan, please reach out to the project manager (Daniel Widis - [widis@unc.edu](mailto:widis@unc.edu)).

## **III. Project Scope**

The design team shall:

- Assist in coordination of University stakeholders, including Morehead staff, Morehead Cain staff, Facilities Planning and Design, Construction Management, Facilities Services, Environment Health and Safety, Energy Services, and other University support services.
- Prepare Contract Documents in compliance with provisions of current applicable NC Building Codes.
- Respond to comments as part of the SCO review process for Capital Planning Projects.
- Prepare Cost Estimates, Project Schedules, and Site Logistics Plans.

## **IV. Design Team**

The University expects prospective design teams and the individuals identified as members of those teams to have demonstrated experience in projects of similar type, size, and complexity. Design proposals should demonstrate the team's ability to design projects that are sympathetic to and supportive of the existing campus context and neighboring land-uses/programming.

While the scopes of work are physically separate, we believe it is of value to conceptually approach and think of the spaces as interconnected. This project will require a design team with expertise across multiple disciplines, though qualification submissions should focus on the core disciplines of landscape architecture and architecture. Teams are encouraged to include any professional disciplines and/or consultants that they deem necessary to successfully complete the work.



Submissions should clearly identify key personnel who will have primary responsibility for the project and day-to-day communications with the university's project team.

## V. Submittal Review Process

**There will be a virtual (Zoom) pre-proposal meeting at the date and time listed in the table above.** Interested designers will be able to discuss the project with the UNC Facilities project manager. Zoom meeting details are included below:

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Topic: Morehead Welcome Plaza and Outdoor Pavilion - Pre-submission Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://unc.zoom.us/j/99746031132>

Meeting ID: 997 4603 1132

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**All pre-submission questions are due by the date and time listed in the table above.** All questions should be emailed directly to the UNC Facilities project manager identified at the end of this document.

**All submittals are due on the date and time listed in the table above.** A Selection Committee will convene on the **date listed in the table above** to discuss the Design Teams' submittals and determine a short list for interviews. The Project Manager (Daniel Widis) will then notify the short-listed firms and provide additional information for the interview phase.

**Designer Interviews will be scheduled per date(s) listed in the table above.** The format of the interview will consist of an in-person presentation by the design team that is followed by a question-and-answer session. Each design team is expected to have present the person(s) from their firm(s) who will be responsible for leading the execution of this project. Additional details related to the interview process will be provided after shortlisting. Following the interviews, the Selection Committee will issue recommendations, in priority order, for the selection of the design team. This list will be present on **the date listed in the table above** to the University's Board of Trustees for approval.

## VI. Submittals

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill seeks letters of interest from firms who have recent experience with similar projects. Submissions should utilize an SF-330 (Part I) format. The submittal must include descriptions of *(based on 01 NCAC 30J .0303 SELECTING CRITERIA)*:

1. Specialized or Appropriate Expertise in the type of project.
2. Past Performance on similar projects.
3. Adequate staff and Proposed Design & Consultant Team for the project.
4. Current Workload and State Projects awarded.
5. Proposed Design Approach for the project including design team and consultants.
6. Recent experience with Project Costs and Schedules.
7. Construction Administration capabilities.
8. Proximity to and familiarity with the area where project is located.
9. Record of successfully completed projects without major legal or technical problems.
10. Historically Underutilized Business (HUB) participation & utilization in proposed team structure; and who/how HUB designers were utilized on previous projects.



11. The team's recent experience with the NC State Construction Office (SCO).
12. Include current SF-330 Part II of lead firm and each proposed consultant.
13. Any other criteria which the Selection Committee shall deem appropriate to this specific project scope of work.

To fairly evaluate the submittals and to better utilize the Selection Committee's review time, we request that only pertinent information relating to the specific selection criteria listed above be provided in an Executive Summary with supporting material to follow in the submittals. UNC-CH does not limit the quantity of pages for proposals.

**Note: (1) one electronic PDF file of the submittal is required.**

Please contact only the Facilities Planning Project Manager for any matters related to this submittal. No other University staff, The University's Board of Trustees, or any University officials are to be contacted other than the project manager listed below. All questions and project submittals shall be directed to:

Daniel Widis, RLA  
University Landscape Architect  
Facilities Planning and Design  
[widis@unc.edu](mailto:widis@unc.edu)



2019 Campus Map/Master Plan

