



ATTORNEY GENERAL OF TEXAS
GREG ABBOTT

November 25, 2013

Mr. Damon C. Derrick
General Counsel
Stephen F. Austin State University
P.O. Box 13065, SFA Station
Nacogdoches, Texas 75962-3065

OR2013-20500

Dear Mr. Derrick:

You ask whether certain information is subject to required public disclosure under the Public Information Act (the "Act"), chapter 552 of the Government Code. Your request was assigned ID# 506633.

Stephen F. Austin State University (the "university") received a request for all proposals and the tabulation sheets pertaining to a specified request for proposals. Although you take no position as to whether the submitted information is excepted under the Act, you state release of the submitted information may implicate the proprietary interests of Outreach Strategists, LLC ("Outreach"). Accordingly, you state, and provide documentation showing, you notified Outreach of the request for information and of its right to submit arguments to this office as to why the submitted information should not be released. *See* Gov't Code § 552.305(d); *see also* Open Records Decision No. 542 (1990) (statutory predecessor to section 552.305 permits governmental body to rely on interested third party to raise and explain applicability of exception in the Act in certain circumstances). We have reviewed the submitted information.

Initially, we note you have only submitted information pertaining to one of the requested proposals. To the extent additional information responsive to the remaining requested information existed on the date the university received this request, we assume you have released it. If you have not released any such information, you must do so at this time. *See* Gov't Code §§ 552.301(a), .302; *see also* Open Records Decision No. 664 (2000) (if governmental body concludes that no exceptions apply to requested information, it must release information as soon as possible).

An interested third party is allowed ten business days after the date of its receipt of the governmental body's notice under section 552.305(d) to submit its reasons, if any, as to why information relating to that party should be withheld from public disclosure. *See* Gov't Code

§ 552.305(d)(2)(B). As of the date of this letter, we have not received comments from Outreach explaining why the submitted information should not be released. Therefore, we have no basis to conclude Outreach has a protected proprietary interest in the submitted information. *See id.* § 552.110; Open Records Decision Nos. 661 at 5-6 (1999) (to prevent disclosure of commercial or financial information, party must show by specific factual evidence, not conclusory or generalized allegations, that release of requested information would cause that party substantial competitive harm), 552 at 5 (1990) (party must establish *prima facie* case that information is trade secret), 542 at 3. Accordingly, the university may not withhold the submitted information on the basis of any proprietary interest Outreach may have in the information. As no exceptions to disclosure have been raised, the university must release the submitted information.

This letter ruling is limited to the particular information at issue in this request and limited to the facts as presented to us; therefore, this ruling must not be relied upon as a previous determination regarding any other information or any other circumstances.

This ruling triggers important deadlines regarding the rights and responsibilities of the governmental body and of the requestor. For more information concerning those rights and responsibilities, please visit our website at http://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open/orl_ruling_info.shtml, or call the Office of the Attorney General's Open Government Hotline, toll free, at (877) 673-6839. Questions concerning the allowable charges for providing public information under the Act may be directed to the Office of the Attorney General, toll free, at (888) 672-6787.

Sincerely,



Sarah Casterline
Assistant Attorney General
Open Records Division

SEC/tch

Ref: ID# 506633

Enc. Submitted documents

c: Requestor
(w/o enclosures)

Outreach Strategists, L.L.C.
909 Texas, Suite 1712
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(w/o enclosures)