



UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

AMENDMENT NO.1 TO SOLICITATION

TO: ALL VENDORS

FROM: Michelle Robinson, CPPB, Procurement Manager

SUBJECT: SOLICITATION NUMBER: USC-RFP-2680-MR
Provide On-Line Tutoring System for the University of South Carolina's Palmetto College.

DATE: February 6, 2015

This Amendment No.1 modifies the Request for Proposal only in the manner and to the extent as stated herein.

Clauses added in Section II. Instructions To Offeror – A. General Instructions and Section VII. Terms and Conditions – A. General.

Revision of TERM OF CONTRACT –OPTION TO RENEW (JAN 2015) in Section VII. Terms and Conditions – B. Special

VENDOR QUESTIONS/ANSWERS

The Proposal Contents subsection of Section IV of the Solicitation has been revised/modified and is attached.

BIDDER SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF AMENDMENT NO.1 IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW AND RETURN IT WITH THEIR BID RESPONSE. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY SUBJECT BID TO REJECTION.

Authorized Signature

Name of Offeror

Date

Add to Section II. Instructions to Offerors – A. General Instructions.

IRAN DIVESTMENT ACT – CERTIFICATION (JAN 2015): (a) The Iran Divestment Act List is a list published by the Board pursuant to Section 11-57-310 that identifies persons engaged in investment activities in Iran. Currently, the list is available at the following URL: <http://procurement.sc.gov/PS/PS-iran-divestment.phtm> (.). Section 11-57-310 requires the government to provide a person ninety days written notice before he is included on the list. The following representation, which is required by Section 11-57-330(A), is a material inducement for the State to award a contract to you. (b) By signing your Offer, you certify that, as of the date you sign, you are not on the then-current version of the Iran Divestment Act List. (c) You must notify the Procurement Officer immediately if, at any time before posting of a final statement of award, you are added to the Iran Divestment Act List. [02-2A077-1]

Add to Section VII. Terms and Conditions – A. General

IRAN DIVESTMENT ACT – ONGOING OBLIGATIONS – JAN (2015): (a) You must notify the procurement officer immediately if, at any time during the contract term, you are added to the Iran Divestment Act List. (b) Consistent with Section 11-57-330(B), you shall not contract with any person to perform a part of the Work, if, at the time you enter into the subcontract, that person is on the then-current version of the Iran Divestment Act List.

Section VII. Terms and Conditions – B. Special – Replace this clause:

TERM OF CONTRACT – OPTION TO RENEW (JAN 2015): (a) At the end of the initial term, and at the end of each renewal term, this contract shall automatically renew for a period of one (1) year, unless contractor receives notice that the state elects not to renew the contract at least thirty (30) days prior to the date of renewal. Regardless, this contract expires no later than the last date stated on the final statement of award. (b) Contractor acknowledges that, unless excused by Section 11-57-320, if the contractor is on the then-current Iran Divestment Act List as of the date of any contract renewal, the renewal will be void ab initio. [07-7B245-2]

QUESTION RECEIVED FROM VENDOR A

QUESTION 1 – Along with our proposal, do we need to submit the “NONRESIDENT TAXPAYER REGISTRATION AFFIDAVIT INCOME TAX WITHHOLDING” form (found on pages 30-31), or is that submitted only after an award?

ANSWER: Yes, please submit the Nonresident Taxpayer Registration Affidavit Income Tax Withholding form with your proposal, if your company is a Non-resident of South Carolina. For other questions regarding the I-312 form, please contact the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM VENDOR B

QUESTION 1 - Is it acceptable to submit the electronic copy of our response on a USB drive?

ANSWER: Yes, this is acceptable.

QUESTION 2 - Does the University intend to conduct demonstrations/presentations during this solicitation process?

ANSWER: Yes; the demonstrations/presentations will be conducted with the two highest ranked two offerors during the evaluation process for the solicitation.

QUESTION 3 - Should proposal contents and order of presentation follow guidelines as listed at the bottom of page 14 / top of page 15, or should we follow the proposal guidelines listed under Page 15 labeled “Proposal Contents”?

ANSWER: Your response should contain information listed in Section IV – Information for Offerors to Submit – General. For Evaluation purposes your proposal should follow the format as listed under Section IV Proposal Contents (see revised Proposal Contents in this amendment).

QUESTION 4 - Are all of the minimum desired services listed on page 13/14 to be addressed in the Proposal Contents listed on Page 15, even if they are not specifically referenced in that Contents section? For example, FERPA and ADA compliance.

ANSWER: Yes, see answer 3 above.

QUESTION 5 - Regarding desired service features on Page 14- User, time-purchased based cost model as opposed to campus-based (i.e., “site license”) cost model. A full explanation of how unused minutes are “rolled over” must be supplied.

Are we correct in assuming that it is the model and the treatment of rolled over hours the University is requesting to be addressed, not the price? The RFP later says on Page 28 for **Bidding Schedule/Business-Price Proposal** that this section is not applicable. There are no specific instructions on submitting a price proposal in terms of how to show cost elements, how to submit cost versus technical proposals, etc.

ANSWER: What we are looking for is a time-purchased by hourly rate cost model. The more hours we purchase, the less the hourly rate. Example: 500 hours times X hourly rate = Y. If we don't use 500 hours in that contract year, what is the cost, if any, of rolling the hours over for the next year? Further, what are any extra costs (flat fee) that must be paid by the university that are not included in the per hour rate? And are any of these flat fee charges one-time only charges in the first year of the contract?

Finally, we would like to see proposals that offer us several options such as 500 hours, 750 hours and 1000 hours. While we will entertain, as part of the overall proposal that includes the hourly structure just outlined, one that gives a flat fee for unlimited tutoring as an option, what we do not want is a proposal that just contains this; as we have no

desire for a big cost for “all you can consume” (i.e., site license type agreement) as we do not know initially how well utilized this service will be.

See revised Proposal Contents in this Amendment.

QUESTION 6 - Regarding desired service features on Page 14 -- Ability to integrate with USC enterprise platform. What is the University’s ERP system?

ANSWER: Banner

QUESTION 7 - Regarding desired service features on Page 14 – Integrations to ERP and Blackboard, Is there a specific integration protocol that the University’s IT department prefers?

ANSWER: USC directly supports Shibboleth via the InCommon Federation. Shibboleth is a SAML2 compliant Single Sign On facility (sign-on authentication). As for the entitlements, Shibboleth/SAML2 can provide them.

QUESTION 8 - Regarding desired service features on Page 14 -- Complete client list for reference checking. Does the University want contact information for the entire client list for reference checking purposes?

ANSWER: No, the University will accept a minimum of three (3) references from clients with whom you have provided the same or similar services as those requested in this RFP.

QUESTION 9 - Where should Qualifications be located in the Proposal Contents outlined on Page 15?

ANSWER: After Section IV. Information for Offerors to Submit. You may label your sections as you respond to them.

QUESTION 10 – Regarding Award Criteria, Evaluation Factors on Page 18/19; Is there a specific weighting system or point system to be applied to these factors, and if so, can you share that with the vendors?

ANSWER: The University prefers not to reveal the maximum allowable points for each Award Criteria at this time. This information may be obtained via a FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) written request after an award has been made.

QUESTIONS RECEIVED FROM VENDOR C

QUESTION 1 - Will there be an interest at any of the USC entities in using their own tutors to provide some of the online tutoring?

ANSWER: Perhaps, but not likely and not consistent campus-to-campus. What we are referring to is involvement with campus coordinators to drive students to the vendor tutors, at least initially.

QUESTION 2 - May we provide several pricing models, with examples of how they'll best suit USC?

ANSWER: Yes, absolutely.

QUESTION 3 - Should we provide a breakdown of the number of expected sessions per hour—for live sessions and asynchronous Q&A or paper/essay review?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION 4 - Should the explanation of how unused minutes are “rolled over” include a breakdown of any additional fees or minutes added to each session?

ANSWER: Yes.

QUESTION 5 - May we provide a complete list of additional products/services offered to higher from Link-Systems?

ANSWER: Certainly.

QUESTION 6 - When will answers to these questions be posted?

ANSWER: An amendment will be issued within a week after the deadline for receipt of questions.

The Proposal Contents subsection of Section IV of the Solicitation has been revised/modified and now reads as follows:

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

To be considered for award, all proposals should include, as a minimum, the following information. All information should be presented in the order listed. Offerors should restate each item below and provide their response to that item immediately thereafter.

In order for the University to consider your proposal, you must submit, at a minimum, the following information, in the listed format:

- **Submittal Letter:** Offeror's proposal should be accompanied by a Submittal Letter clearly identifying the following information and be signed by an individual authorized to sign contracts on behalf of the Offeror.
 1. The individual who is the signatory for contracts and who is responsible for the delivery of contract services.
 2. The Federal Identification Number or Social Security Number of the Offeror.
 3. The email address to send all notices relative to a potential contract and the name of the individual to whom notices should be addressed.

- **Technical Proposal**

In its technical proposal, offeror should address the following:

- Explain **your company's** methodology of process and the internal systems used to provide on-line tutoring systems.
- Describe **your company's** hiring, training, and evaluation process of the tutors. Include information concerning tutor evaluation of your organization and how tutors are "situated" – do they work out of a central office or remotely.
- Describe **your company's** ability to integrate with USC enterprise platform, including student sign-on authentication and entitlement so that students can use USC log-on access.
- Describe your company's ability to integrate with Blackboard.
- Describe **your company's** ability to assess and report on student satisfaction with service.
- Describe **your company's** ability to service those students who have English as a second language.
- Explain **your company's** capability and willingness to coordinate with local campus student success staff as targeted students desired. How does **your company** ensure accuracy and consistency of quality?
- Describe your company's analytics – ability to monitor and report
- Describe your company's marketing capabilities to all those that are affected by its presence: students, faculty and staff.

Offeror is to certify and explain its ability to meet/exceed the following minimum requirements:

- 24/7 live tutor availability, with immediate student access and a 24-hour “turnaround” from contact to assistance provided.
 - A broad number of subject areas covered to include: writing/English (particularly essay preparation), math, computer/technology, languages, sciences, business, and nursing. Provide a complete list of subjects covered.
 - Video and audio option for services available for students.
 - Mobile device (phone/tablet) app available for students.
 - Have capacity to provide academic research and analysis for Palmetto College users based on retention (archiving) of service use.
- **Training**
 - Describe how your company will provide training and support for campus personnel, particularly faculty as PC faculty, per their terms of employment with USC, can be encouraged but not required to direct students to this service.
 - Initial training **must** take place at multiple sites. Local representation for support and training is strongly preferred. If local representation is not available, explain how USC will be provided dedicated service.
 - Due to the relation-based nature of the PC organization, a willingness to partner with central office staff to support this product is essential as central office staff will need to provide “on the ground” support on a continual basis – Explain how your company will provide this.
- **Back-up and Recovery Plans**
 - Explain your company’s policy for Back-up and Recovery plans for proposed network, data, and system outages and disruptions.
- **COST**

Submit your best terms from a cost or price and from a technical standpoint. The University of South Carolina strongly prefers that Offerors submit User Time Purchased based cost model as opposed to Campus-Based (i.e., “site license”) cost model. While the University of South Carolina will not be evaluating Offeror’s Cost, the University of South Carolina reserves

the right to negotiate Offeror's Cost with the highest ranked Offeror.

****NOTE: PLEASE SUBMIT COST IN A SEPARATE ENVELOPE****