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RFP GMU-1700-21 ADDENDUM NO. 1:

Date: December 9, 2020
Reference: GMU-1700-21 IT Consulting Services
Proposal Due Date: Friday, January 22, 2021 @ 2:00 PM EST; Electronic Submission
Procurement Officers: Michele Rogers, mroger19@gmu.edu
Katherine Sirotin, ksirotin@gmu.edu






Questions received by Friday, December 4, 2020 by 4:00 PM EST; Answers in **red** below.

Addendum No. 1 will be considered part of the RFP GMU-1700-21. Vendors should include any changes that result from this addendum as well as the information provided below in their offer:

1. Who is the incumbent for these services?
 - Answer: The incumbents are: System Soft, WTC Consulting, Censeo, Sycom and Datastrong
2. What is the previous spend for these services?
 - Answer: Spending under GMU-1288-16 was approximately \$4.3M for roughly twenty-five (25) unique purchases. Projects spanned a wide area of strategic engagements including:
 - i. Network strategic plan development and road map
 - ii. Systems and storage engineering support
 - iii. Business analytics support
 - iv. Enterprise data integration
 - v. Salesforce development
 - vi. Data governance
 - vii. IT service management and process support
3. What is the budget for the services within this bid? Our firm intends to bid on the above RFP as we have all the required skills set and past performance. We do not see any specific statement of work or technology/tools landscape and overview in the RFP. Could you please let me know if we are missing any attachment or this is it?
 - Answer: The Statement of Needs, Section XI, page 4 of the RFP document provides a description of the services Mason is requesting under this RFP. All documents for RFP GMU-1700-21 IT Consulting can be found in eVA as well as on Mason's Fiscal Services Page. The following links should be helpful:
 - i. <https://fiscal.gmu.edu/purchasing/do-business-with-mason/view-current-solicitation-opportunities/>
 - ii. <https://mvendor.cgieva.com/Vendor/public/AllOpportunities>

4. Sample Report – Please specify the type of detail you would like provided in these reports. For Services. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
5. “Provide Proposed Financial Offer”. What licenses are expected to be needed?
 - **Answer: The incumbents are: System Soft, WTC Consulting, Censeo, Sycom and Datastrong**
6. Does the university currently have an incumbent vendor for IT Consulting Services?
 - **Answer: Please refer to Question 1.**
7. If so, what is the incumbent's pricing for these services?

- **Answer: Please use the following link to our **VASCUPP** site which houses all the contracts awarded under the previous IT Consulting RFP <https://vascupp.org/contracts> The easiest way to search for these contracts is either by contract number or by the buyer’s name, Michele Rogers. Use the right-hand page with arrow icon to access the link to the contract:**

+ IT Consulting	Datastrong	GMU-1288-16-02	GMU	Michele Rogers		Information Technology	05/31/2021	
+ IT Consulting	WTC	GMU-1288-16-03	GMU	Michele Rogers		Information Technology	05/30/2021	
+ IT Consulting	Censeo Consulting	GMU-1288-16-04	GMU	Michele Rogers		Information Technology	05/21/2021	
+ IT Consulting	System Soft Technologies	GMU-1288-16-05	GMU	Michele Rogers		Information Technology	05/31/2021	
+ IT Consulting	SyCom Technologies	GMU-1288-16-06	GMU	Michele Rogers		Information Technology	05/31/2021	

- **Once you have opened the contract link, you will want to scroll to the bottom of the Contract Database page under **Attachments** to find the original contract and any modifications/renewals:**

Attachments

Name
Datastrong - Final.pdf
Contract Renewal Option 4 GMU-1288-02 DataStrong 5.31.2020-5.30.2021 fully executed.pdf

8. What is the university's budget allocated for this IT consulting contract?
 - **Answer: No budget to be provided. Please see Question 2 for previous spend history.**
9. With reference to Page number 5, clause XII subclause c – “For your last ten most recent projects (Determined by date of final payment by the customer) that exceeded \$50k and were billed on an hourly basis, list the following”; I want to check whether my company will

get disqualified or not, if instead of 10 projects we submit 4.5 projects? **Answer: The ability to list projects may impact a proposal's score**

10. Do firms need to provide all five categories of the on-demand IT consulting services listed in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v to be considered for a contract award? Or can we bid on some categories (Items i – v) and not others? **Answer: Vendors are not required to bid on all five categories.**

- If we can bid on specific categories, is it acceptable to say “Not applicable” to proposal requirements that do not appear relevant to the categories we are bidding on? **Answer: Yes**

11. Does the potential exist for the “Enterprise Applications Services” listed in Section XI.1.a, Item 2 (on page 4 of the RFP) to include consulting services such as system requirements definition, system needs assessments, system selection, and implementation oversight? **Answer: Yes**

12. Please clarify the level of participation desired for SWaM businesses. Is there a specific percentage per project? Per project, will this participation be an aspirational goal or a requirement? **Answer: Mason does not have a set aside requirement.**

13. We are required to complete and return a SWaM Utilization Plan (Attachment A of the RFP). Since this is a convenience contract, we won't know what portion of each project can be subcontracted until we see a specific Statement of Needs from Mason. Is it acceptable for us to say that we will identify SWaM subcontractors on a case-by-case basis? **Answer: Mason does not have a set aside requirement.**

14. Is this a new contract or a re-bid of an earlier contract? If it's a re-bid:

- How many vendors were included in the contract? **Answer: Please see Question 1.**
- How many projects were conducted through the previous contract? **Answer: Please see Question 2.**
- What is the total dollar value of the projects conducted through the previous contract? **Answer: Please see Question 2.**
- Please provide a list of the types of projects (i.e. the nature of the work) conducted through the previous contract? **Answer: Please see Question 2.**

15. Does Mason have a limit on how many firms it will pre-approve within each of the five on-demand IT consulting service categories listed in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v? **Answer: No**

- If yes, what is Mason's cap in terms of the number of firms it will include in its pool of pre-qualified firms?

16. Section XIII.B.2 (References) and Section XIII.B.4 make reference to “trademark licensing services.” Is this correct? Section XIII.B.7 also makes reference to “licensees.”

- Answer: No, this is not correct and a typo. “IT related support services and consulting” should replace “trademark licensing services” in all these sections

17. When Mason has a project need, will it contact all of the firms on this contract (within the applicable category in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v of the RFP) and provide them with an opportunity to submit a proposal? If no, what selection process will be used when project needs arise? Answer: The purpose of this RFP is to provide ITS with additional resources on an “as needed basis”. Vendor selection criteria will be based on the project being undertaken, and contract award does not guarantee any future work from Mason.

18. Will Mason contemplate exceptions to the RFP terms and conditions, which would follow professional and industry standards for the type of work contemplated. Such exceptions may include modifications to termination of contract, indemnification, and audit rights?

- Answer: Mason is open to negotiation on terms and conditions. Please see Section XIII B. 1. d. We are asking for offerors to identify those proposed or preferred changes in their proposal submission. However, Mason is prohibited from agreeing to any indemnification language in a contractual agreement. Please see VA Code 2.2-1837 A.1.c. <https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title2.2/chapter18/section2.2-1837/>). According to the Virginia Code, an institution of higher education cannot agree to any indemnification unless it is approved by the Governor of Virginia. This process is on an exception basis, very lengthy and rarely done.

19. Regarding Attachment C, Item 11 (Audits): Is having a completed SOC report (SSAE16) a requirement for this work (as opposed to other third party independent assessments)? If yes, could this be negotiated depending upon the categories we are bidding on in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v of the RFP? Answer: This is a requirement, and Mason is open to negotiation based on Offerors proposal.

20. In addition to the services lists on RFP page 4-5, is GMU interested in receiving proposals from bidders who provide strategic information technology services? That is, bidders who can provide guidance and expertise on higher education-specific IT governance, data governance, privacy, and information security strategic initiatives like program strategy assessments, risk assessments, and business continuity and disaster recovery planning? Answer: The University is open to receiving proposals for these services.

21. Regarding RFP page 7, section B.2. Our company appreciates our clients’ generosity in providing references for our firm and we do not wish to overwhelm our clients with reference requests. We are glad to provide project profiles for similar projects, but would like to provide a customer references (such as contact name, title, phone and email addresses) for similar projects upon being named a finalist for the project. Is this acceptable? Answer: The ability to provide references will impact a proposal’s score.

22. What is your governance structure for information technology decisions such as policy creation, control implementation, and risk mitigation? Is decision-making overseen at the state level (e.g., from a state CIO with broad authority for all IT operations within the state) or does your information technology unit have significant decision-making discretion?

- Answer: Through collaboration and a primary focus on customer success, ITS finds solutions to meet the university's wide-ranging technology needs and provides an IT environment in which our students can thrive. We invite you to learn more about working with ITS including our governance structure at <https://its.gmu.edu/working-with-its/>.

23. Please describe the roles of the distributed versus central IT with approximate staff numbers.

- Answer: Information Technology Services (ITS) provides superior technology and collaborative solutions that inspire life changing learning and success for our students and the entire Mason community. We invite you to learn more about what we do to drive excellence in teaching, research, and administrative operations at <https://its.gmu.edu/about-its/>.

24. Please provide information size of the size of the GMU IT environment? a) Number of employees? b) Number of Servers? c) Number of laptops & desktops? d) Number of switches, routers, firewalls? e) Number of internet connections? Answer: Please see Question 23.

25. Have you adopted, are you considering for adoption, an industry recognized information security framework (e.g., NIST, ISO/IEC, CIS Critical Security Controls)? Please specify the framework used. Answer: Masons Security Policy and Standard are based upon a tailored version of NIST 800-53 modified to the support the Universities unique needs and requirements.

26. Will all potential Bidders receive copies of all submitted questions and answers issued as an Addendum to the RFP? Answer: Responses to questions will be posted on the Mason Purchasing Website <https://fiscal.gmu.edu/purchasing/do-business-with-mason/view-current-solicitation-opportunities/> by 5:00 PM EST on December 10, 2020. If you submitted questions for this RFP, you would have received an email response providing this link as well.

27. Is there an incumbent and are they eligible to bid on this project? If so, who was the incumbent and what was the value of the contract? Answer: Please see Question 1.

28. Regarding Section XII, Page 5 - COST OF SERVICES: Please provide hourly pricing for any and all rates associated with consulting, planning, install, implementation, development project management, etc. Question : Please provide a rate card template or please provide broader guidelines on the information to be included in the rate card. Answer: No further guidance will be provided to Offerors.

29. Regarding Section XI, point d., Page 5 - Describe the ability to provide continuity of consultants throughout the duration of a project. Provide examples of both on-site and remote teams that would work with George Mason University. Question: Please let us know if on-site team are expected to work from GMU. Remote teams are expected to work from supplier location within US or GMU is open outside US location as well Answer: US locations only.

30. Regarding Section XI, point e., Page 5 - Describe services available from your firm and/or partners and associated costs. Examples of services that could be included are: Implementation
ii. Development
iii. Project Management

- iv. Architecture and Design
- v. Capacity Planning
- vi. Installation and Configuration
- vii. Performance and Scalability
- viii. Conversion
- ix. Monitoring, administration and upgrades
- x. Operations metrics

- Question: Our understanding is these services are expected to be covered as part of the rate card. Please confirm. Let us know if vendor is expected to provide any specific costs of details other than rate card. **Answer: No further guidance will be provided to Offerors.**

31. Application specific questions:

- What is student information system being used? Is it on cloud or On-premise?
Answer: Banner, On-premise
- b. What is the LMS (learning Management System) being used? Is it on cloud or On-premise? **Answer: Blackboard, cloud**
- c. What is the Marketing & Campaign management system being used **Answer: many different systems, including Salesforce TargetX**
- d. What is the Student admissions system being used?
- e. What are all the 3rd party applications (eg. Medical records management, cafeteria management. Smart card services etc) that are linked to core GMU apps? **Answer: The University uses too many different things to list them all. Offerors should respond with what their firm is capable of supporting.**
- f. What Is the app/platform being used for placements? **Answer: Please refine/define the meaning of “placements”.**

32. Enterprise Application specific questions:

- What Is the HR system being used? **Answer: Banner**
- b. What is the Procurement system being used? **Answer: Banner**
- c. What is the Finance system being used? **Answer: Banner**

33. IT Platform Specific Questions:

- For Custom applications, what is the technology stack being used
- b. What is the integration platform to connect across the apps **Answer: Informatica for new integrations, legacy using scripts and Automic scheduler**
- c. Is there any data warehouse or data analytics platform present ? if yes, What is the platform? **Answer: Homegrown Oracle warehouse (PLSQL packages for ETL), MicroStrategy for reporting**
- d. What are all the collaboration platforms exist? << e.g. Teams, sharepoint etc >>
Answer: <https://its.gmu.edu/service/category/email-and-collaboration/>
- e. What is the service help desk platform being used for ticket raising? **Answer: Team Dynamix**
- f. Is there predictive analytics usage ? (basically in functional areas like Marketing, student success, student drop out and advancement) If yes, details of the tools and technology **Answer: SAS and MicroStrategy**
- g. Is there any Devops platform?

34. Regarding Analytic Application, what are the most important pain points / challenges faced with regards to data & Analytics in the enterprise? What are the most significant drivers for this programme? **Answer: Security model, business rules around data, aligning data from disparate sources**
35. Regarding Analytic Application ,please share the technology stack in the current landscape for ETL, Datawarehouse, BI & Reporting **Answer: Homegrown Oracle warehouse (PLSQL packages for ETL), MicroStrategy for reporting**
36. Regarding Analytic Application, please let us know if the existing system is on-premise or on cloud. If on cloud, please share the technology stack. **Answer: Oracle and MicroStrategy both run on-premise.**
37. Regarding Analytic Application, what are the different projects planned for Data & Analytics Stream under this RFP? Does it include development projects or support work? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
38. Regarding Analytic Application, can you please share your current IT spend? Also, please share approximate ballpark of the spend for Data & Analytics stream. **Answer: Please see <https://budget.gmu.edu/budget-books-and-fact-books/>.**
39. Regarding Analytic Application, how is the current Data & Analytics team organized? **Answer: Please see Question 23.**
40. Regarding Analytic Application, is there any scope for Data Science/Advanced Analytics use case implementation using techniques like Machine Learning, Advanced statistics, etc.? If yes, please share details like the use cases to be implemented as part of the scope for this RFP, data sources available for consumption by Analytics models, current/preferred tech stack on premise/cloud-based for Data Science, etc. **Answer: At this time we have few requirements for Advanced Analytics**
41. Please clarify what the University means by trademark licensing services. **Answer: Please see Answer 16.**
42. P. 7, #2, Please clarify if the University is only requesting trademark licensing services for references. **Answer: Please see Answer 16.**
43. P. 8, #5, Is it the University's intent to know how to deploy this contract or how to kick-off a specific project/SOW? **Answer: No.**
44. P. 8, #7 – Proposed Financial Offer/Considerations – Please clarify what service pricing the University is requesting for licenses (retail and internal). **Answer: Mason intends to utilize the resulting contract(s) solely for the purpose of obtaining information technology consulting services.**
45. How many contractors does University procured last year under this contract? **Answer: Please see question 2.**

46. Could you please share the last years annual spent under this contract? **Answer: Please see question 2.**
47. Is this RFP strictly for staff augmentation or project based Task Order services be procured through this? **Answer: Please see question 44.**
48. How do we provide the rates for consulting, planning, install, implementation, development, project management since we don't have the scope of the work or are you just looking for hourly rates? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
49. What are the labor categories we should provide rates for or we should assume labor categories and provide rates? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
50. What sample quarterly sales report we need to submit? What would University like to see in the report? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
51. Section XI, item c, "... names, qualifications, and experience in personnel to be assigned". Following are the questions:
- By providing representative resumes, would it suffice to meet this requirement?
 - If yes, how many resumes are you anticipating? One in each Service Area – totaling 5? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
52. Section XI, item e, what is expected here? A rough-order-of-magnitude, which is will be provided as a range or a close to estimate one? If you are seeking close to estimate one, please provide us your IT Infrastructure Environment – number of servers, types of OS, number of VMs, number of desktops and laptops, to begin with. **Answer: Please see question 23.**
53. Section XIII, item B SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS, 2. References – are you preferring three (3) Education Institutions references? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
54. Services: Are you considering adding IT strategy and roadmapping services? **Answer: The University is open to receiving proposals for these services.**
55. References/Case Studies: Are you seeking 3 references/case studies for each category, or 3 overall references? **Answer: Three reference overall.**
56. Proposal Deadline: Because of the upcoming December/January holidays, are you considering an extension to the January 22 deadline? **Answer: No**
57. How many contract awards are anticipated? In Section XI it says "It is anticipated that contracts will be awarded to multiple firms"; but in Section XIV B. AWARD, it suggests that one contract will be awarded **Answer: Please see Question 17.**

58. Section XIII.B.4. Offerors are to provide a narrative describing experience and qualifications in providing “trademark licensing services” but that does not appear to be part of the scope outlined in Section XI. Statement of Needs. Please clarify. **Answer: Please see Answer 16.**
59. Will an offeror be disqualified if it does not have 10 completed projects that were billed on an hourly basis, as per Section XII.c. ? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
60. How many task orders are anticipated on this contract? Can GMU provide an estimate to the amount of funds that will be awarded at the task order level? **Answer: Please see Question 2.**
61. How many of the five corporate competencies described in Section XI.1.a. must an offeror be deemed capable in to be considered for award? **Answer: Please see question 10.**
62. Referring to Section XI (Statement of Needs)- Item 1, Sub Bullet e- “Description of Services available”- Is the expectation from the respondents to provide services and associated costs for Services listed in Sub-bullet a (Business Management Services, Enterprise Application Services, Enterprise Infrastructure Services, Project Management Services and Security Services)?
Answer: Yes
63. What is the breakup of George Mason’s current IT footprint- Data Center, Co-Lo and Cloud?
64. What connectivity services are provided to students, faculty and guest as it relates to internet and intranet services? **Answer: Please see <https://its.gmu.edu/service/network-access/>.**
65. Are there any specific project management tools, practices (agile, hybrid, waterfall) that George Mason prefers in the execution of this MSA? **Answer: Please see <https://its.gmu.edu/working-with-its/ppmo/>.**
66. Are there current processes in place from an incident response, disaster recovery and business recovery standpoint? If yes, please provide an overview. **Answer: Please see Question 23.**
67. Referencing RFP Text, Page 4, Section XI.1.a.i-v, Provide detailed corporate competencies/experience serving one or more of the technologies and capabilities listed below:
- Business Management Services
 - Enterprise Applications Services
 - Enterprise Infrastructure Services
 - Project, Program, and Portfolio Management Services
 - Security Services
- Question:** Can Mason confirm if the Offeror is required to bid on all five competencies provided in Section XI.1.a.i-v or does Mason plan to issue separate awards for each core competency/experience? **Answer: Please see Question 10.**
68. Referencing, RFP Text, Page 5, Section XI.1.i, *Describe how your firm would propose a functional staffing plan indicating the number, characteristics, and schedule for the consultants.* **Question:** To adequately define a staffing plan required in the Statement of Needs in Section XI.1.i, can Mason clarify if the task orders issued under this RFP will be focused on deploying full teams to satisfy requirements or will task orders be more staff augmentation focused? **Answer: Please see Question 17.**

69. Referencing, RFP Text, Page 5, Section: XII.c, For your last ten most recent projects (Determined by date of final payment by the customer) that exceeded \$50k and were billed on an hourly basis, list the following: 1. The type of consulting 2. The original estimated hours 3. The final hours billed 4. The original project cost estimated 5. The final price (all charges) paid by the customer **Question:** Does Mason require the last 10 most recent projects be directly related to the five competencies listed in the Statement of Needs in Section XI.1.a.i – v.? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
70. Referencing, RFP Text, Page 6, Section: XIII.A.1.b, The subject line of your email submission should read, “RFP GMU-1700-21” If you are sending multiple emails, please state so in the subject line with the wording, “This is email # _ of _ total” .
- Does Mason require offerors to submit a separate technical volume and price volume referenced in Proposal Preparation and Submission Requirements in Section XIII.A.1.b? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
71. Referencing, RFP Text, Page 7, Section XIII.B.2, References: No fewer than three (3), preferably from other comparable higher education institutions to which your firm is/has provided trademark licensing services which are similar in size and scope to that which has been described herein, that demonstrate the offeror’s qualifications.
- Does the Offeror need to provide three (3) references for each corporate competency they are bidding on in Section XI.1.a.i-v? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
72. Can you please provide a sampling of key IT initiatives in the next 12 – 24 months where there is the potential to engage consulting resources? **Answer: Please see Question 23.**
73. Can you provide any high-level technology strategy and/or direction that might provide insight into the areas of technology investment where you need outside assistance? **Answer: Please see Question 23 to learn more about ITS.**
74. Can you quantify the # of hours, resources, or other indication of demand for technology resources to augment your team? **Answer: Not at this time.**
75. Are you open to project-based scope or IT managed services with a defined service level for any of the mentioned IT skill areas? **Answer: Potentially.**
76. Please provide a list of key technology platforms used for the following areas. This information will help us to align resource availability with platforms that George Mason has in-use today. If there are plans to change any technology platforms in the near-future, please provide that information.
- Student Information System (SIS)
 - Learning Management System (LMS)
 - Office productivity software, e.g. Office 365, Google Suite
 - Website content management system (CMS)
 - Database platforms, e.g. Oracle, Microsoft SQL Server
 - Integration middleware, e.g. Mulesoft, Informatica, SQL batch jobs
 - Customer relationship management – Salesforce is specified, is this native Salesforce, TargetX, other
 - Hypervisor platform, e.g. VMWare, Microsoft HyperV

- Operating system platform, e.g. X # of RedHat Linux, # of Windows
- Security technology platforms

Answer: Please see Questions 33-40.

77. Are data centers and server infrastructure managed in-house? Are cloud infrastructure-as-a-service providers (Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure) in-use? **Answer: Yes.**
78. XI: Would you share a list of technologies relevant to XI.1.a that are currently in use at GMU? **Answer: The University uses too many different things to list them all. Offerors should respond with what their firm is capable of supporting.**
79. XI.1.a: Would you share specific areas among those listed that are of the highest priority to GMU? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
80. XI.1.d: Please describe accommodations that are place to support remote work should the situation require it. Would you please share guidance regarding where GMU allows work to be conducted? For example, does GMU allow remote work to be done outside of the United States? Please share any restrictions regarding where GMU data resides. **Answer: Please see Question 29.**
81. XIII.A.2.b: We understand that the offer is to be prepared "simply and economically," but are there expectations regarding the number of pages? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
82. XIII.B.2. References This section refers to "Trademark Licensing services" which does not seem to fit the requested requirements. Could you please clarify the references requested? **Answer: Please see question 16.**
83. XIII.B.4. Written Narrative: This section refers to "trademark licensing services", could you please clarify what you are looking for in terms of this RFP? **Answer: Please see question 16.**
84. XIII.B.6 a. Sample reports: Could you please share additional details on what types of sample quarterly sales reports you are looking for specific to IT services? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
85. XIII.B.7 What licenses (retail or internal) does George Mason anticipate needing? **Answer: Please see Question 44.**
86. Is there a budget that has been allocated to this project? **Answer: No budget to be provided. Please see Question 2 for previous spend history.**
87. Do we have to provide resumes of key personnel in the proposal itself or after the contract award? **Answer: Proposal**
88. What will be the starting date for this project? **Answer: N/A**
89. Is it compulsory for us to provide sample quarterly sales report in the proposal? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
90. Will there be additional marks given in scoring, if we show Higher Education Institution

references? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**

91. Can we propose our own approach to provide advisory services for the given scope in an effective way? **Answer: Yes**
92. Is it necessary to provide advisory services for all the services given in scope or can we give advisory services for individual services? **Answer: Please see Question 10.**
93. Is it compulsory to sub-contract 42% of the project to small businesses? **Answer: No, it is not a requirement and 42% is the Commonwealth's goal (this is not a goal or requirement for offerors). Offerors are not required to subcontract any of this work but, if your firm does plan to subcontract any work, we encourage you to consider SWaM vendors. If you do plan to subcontract to SWaM vendors you may enter that information into Attachment A, Small Business Subcontracting Plan and list out the SWaM vendors you will be using on Attachment A. If you do not plan on subcontracting any work you will only fill out the top section and mark the box that states "I plan to complete all work".**
94. Section VII: SWaM Certification: States that Vendors currently SWaM certified agree to maintain their certification for the duration of the contract and shall submit all renewal documentation at least 30 days prior to existing SWaM expiration. In the event that Datastrong graduates out of the SWaM program during the 5 year period, what impacts would that have on the contract? **Answer: Is not a requirement that a vendor be SWaM in order to be awarded a contract with Mason. The only impact that SWaM certification has on the scoring is, if a vendor is certified as a SWaM business by the Commonwealth of Virginia at time of proposal submission, they will receive five (5) points for being certified SWaM (see Section XIV. Initial Evaluation Criteria). The contractual requirement is that any company that is awarded a contract by Mason, who is eligible/qualifies to be SWaM certified, either seek SWaM certification (if they qualify and are not currently certified) and/or maintain that certification and do not allow it lapse if they continue to be eligible for SWaM. If you are no longer eligible to be certified as SWaM after a contract is awarded it would not affect the award decision and there would be no penalty for no longer being eligible or no longer qualifying as a SWaM business.**
95. Section XI: Statement of Needs – Section A In the event a firm feels they don't have the past experience to address one of the five areas, should they include a section in the response for that area, and if so, should they just indicate they don't intend to respond to that section? **Answer: Please see Question 10.**
96. Section XI: Statement of needs – Section E For the services available from the firm and associated costs, Datastrong's primary project approach is done on a time and materials basis (T&M), so without scope/requirements, it is difficult to provide associated cost information. We can provide rate card labor categories that would apply to the service areas depicted which would have the associated hourly cost defined in Section XII – Cost of Services. Is that an acceptable approach or can the University provide more instruction on how to respond to Section E? **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
97. Section XI: Statement of needs – Section I Just want to confirm that the University is really just looking for how a firm would determine the plan for staffing and how it would come up with

the number, characteristics, and schedule for the project. The question reads as if the University may be looking for the firm to define the actual number, characteristics, and schedule, which would be difficult to do without specific scope, budget, and anticipated timelines. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**

98. Section XI: Statement of needs - Section J Without specific scope / requirements, it is difficult to determine what, if any, roles/functions would need to be subcontracted. Can you please elaborate as to what the goal of this question is? **The intent of this question is to have vendors list in their proposal if they plan on subcontracting out any work to other entities. If you do not know if you will be utilizing subcontractors you may state as such in your proposal. If you are awarded a contract with Mason and receive projects/tasking under the contract and decide to subcontract work at that time, you would need to disclose that you are subcontracting work and provide the name and information of the party you are subcontracting with to the Contract Administrator and Contracting Officer.**
99. Section XII: Cost of Services – Section C For the last ten most recent projects – want to confirm that we can only use projects that have “ended”. If the firm has several multi-year government contracts where we provide program support (versus project support) – are we unable to use those? The size and scale of our projects supporting these types of efforts highlights our ability to manage multiple workstreams, client requirements, as well as our ability to partner with our customers in developing multi-year program vision and development initiatives. These projects have an annual period of performance that is renewed so the project really doesn’t end. We have experience supporting a program at the University that we think we should be able to reference that also falls into this category. **Answer: Ongoing projects can be listed.**
100. Section XII: Cost of Services – Section C As a follow on to question 6 – several of the projects we would look to include are estimated based on scope but in terms of resources needed to support the program. As a result, we are required to stay within budget or request additional funds in order to meet evolving needs. In the types of projects where we provide program support, the ability to manage budget related to specific scope isn’t something that is done as scope is redefined based on changing priorities during the course of the period of performance – typically annually. In these scenarios, we are unclear as to how we would depict those in section C. **Answer: Offerors may wish to identify the structure of the work as either Design/Detail, Level-of-Effort, or Performance-based.**
101. Who is the current incumbent on this contract? **Answer: Please see Answer 7.**
102. What is the current pricing on the contract? **Answer: Please see Answer 7.**
103. What is the budget allocated to this contract? **Answer: No budget to be provided. Please see Question 2 for previous spend history.**
104. How many temps are currently working on the existing contract and will they all be transitioned to the new vendors? **Answer: N/A**
105. Is it a multiple award contract? **Answer: Yes**

106. In reference to Technologies and capabilities, Please share the list of the all the products that will be used to deliver the project **Answer: Mason uses too many different things to list them all. Offerors should respond with what their firm is capable of supporting.**
107. In reference to Project, Please confirm the list of applications and services to implemented and transition from. **Answer: Please see Question 106.**
108. In reference to Project, Please provide the volume and the type of data/documents to be migrated/converted from the existing application (As Is) to the proposed new application (To be). **Answer: Please see Question 106.**
109. In reference to Project, Please share the list and names of licenses (Products and Services) which need to be priced. **Answer: Please see Question 44.**
110. In reference to Project, Please share the high-level timeline or project duration. **Answer: N/A**
111. In reference to Project, Please share the project budget and contract amount for this project. **Answer: Please see Question 2.**
112. In reference to Project, Please confirm if training will be for the entire project team or for “Train the Trainer” only. **Answer: N/A**
113. Please confirm if all or few services can be performed and delivered utilizing offshore resources. **Answer: No offshore resources are requested.**
114. Due to Covid situation - Will any of the consultant need to be onsite for project related activities immediately or can be performed remotely. **Answer: The length of the contract should extend beyond the pandemic, and onsite consulting may be needed.**
115. Please confirm if QA testing resources will be considered in end-to- end project methodology and resource pricing. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
116. Regarding the Statement of Needs, Please confirm the requirements for the post-production support. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
117. Regarding the Statement of Needs, Please confirm if more environments (e.g. UAT, DR etc.) are required other than production, development & test environments. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**

118. Regarding the Statement of Needs, Please confirm if Infrastructure for Development, QA, etc. will be provided by George Mason University. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
119. Regarding the Statement of Needs, Please confirm who will be taking care of any infrastructure related work. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
120. Regarding the Statement of Needs, Do you have any current incumbent vendors on this contract? If yes, how many vendors are currently performing work on this IT consulting contract? **Answer: Please see Question 1**
121. Regarding the Statement of Needs Please provide the list of technology platforms/vendors currently in use by IT staff and applications. For example, Microsoft or AWS or Google or IBM or multiple vendor products. **Answer: Mason uses too many different things to list them all. Offerors should respond with what their firm is capable of supporting.**
122. Regarding the Statement of Needs Please provide the details as to where do you see the skill/knowledge/expertise gap in the IT services being provided by in-house IT staff and/or incumbent IT vendor staff. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
123. Regarding the Statement of Needs Please let us know the details about how the incumbent vendor contractors are structured along with the Mason IT team. **Answer: Please see Question 2**
124. Regarding the Statement of Needs Please let us know what all the IT functions/services are considered as on-demand consulting services. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
125. Regarding the Statement of Needs Please let us know the other departments and stakeholders of Mason for whom on-demand IT services are provided apart from Mason IT team/department. **Answer: No additional guidance will be provided to Offerors.**
126. Are the vendors responding to this RFP required to have SWaM certification? **Answer: No**
127. Do we get the maximum point value – 5 (Page # 8 of the RFP) if we subcontract with certified firm in order to meet this requirement instead? **Answer: No**
128. What would be the subcontracting goal % percentage for this RFP that the vendor needs to have in order to work with the Small Business? Is it a mandatory requirement to subcontract with Small Business for this contract in case the vendor responding to this RFP is not a small business? **Answer: Mason does not have a set aside requirement.**

129. Can we propose the references from any state agencies or commercial clients other than higher education institutions? Are we required to provide their contract details? Please advise
Answer: Yes
130. How much advance notice is given with an on demand consulting request? **Answer: As much as possible.**
131. How large is your IT department? **Answer: Please see Question 23**
132. How many people work on the help desk? **Answer: 8-10 FTE and 10-15 part-time staff.**
133. Is there a prevailing event/initiative/etc. that triggered the creation and release of this solicitation? **Answer: No**
134. Do firms need to provide all five categories of the on-demand IT consulting services listed in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v to be considered for a contract award? Or can we bid on some categories (Items i – v) and not others? If we bid on specific categories, is it acceptable to say “Not applicable” to proposal requirements that do not appear relevant to the categories we are bidding on? **Answer: Please see Question 10**
135. Does the potential exist for the “Enterprise Applications Services” listed in Section XI.1.a, Item 2 (on page 4 of the RFP) to include consulting services such as system requirements definition, system needs assessments, system selection, and implementation oversight? **Answer: Yes**
136. Please clarify the level of participation desired for SWaM businesses. Is there a specific percentage per project? Per project, will this participation be an aspirational goal or a requirement? **Answer: Mason does not have a set aside requirement.**
137. We are required to complete and return a SWaM Utilization Plan (Attachment A of the RFP). Since this is a convenience contract, we won’t know what portion of each project can be subcontracted until we see a specific Statement of Needs from Mason. Is it acceptable for us to say that we will identify SWaM subcontractors on a case-by-case basis? **Answer: Mason does not have a set aside requirement.**
138. Is this a new contract or a re-bid of an earlier contract? If it’s a re-bid:
- How many vendors were included in the contract?
 - How many projects were conducted through the previous contract?
 - What is the total dollar value of the projects conducted through the previous contract?
 - Please provide a list of the types of projects (i.e. the nature of the work) conducted through the previous contract? **Answer: Please see Questions 1 and 2.**
139. Does Mason have a limit on how many firms it will pre-approve within each of the five on-demand IT consulting service categories listed in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v? If yes, what is Mason’s cap in terms of the number of firms it will include in its pool of pre-qualified firms?
Answer: No

140. Section XIII.B.2 (References) and Section XIII.B.4 make reference to “trademark licensing services.” Is this correct? Section XIII.B.7 also makes reference to “licensees.” **Answer: Please see Question 16.**
141. When Mason has a project need, will it contact all of the firms on this contract (within the applicable category in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v of the RFP) and provide them with an opportunity to submit a proposal? If no, what selection process will be used when project needs arise? **Answer: Please see Question 17**
142. Will Mason contemplate exceptions to the RFP terms and conditions, which would follow professional and industry standards for the type of work contemplated. Such exceptions may include modifications to termination of contract, indemnification, and audit rights? **Answer: Mason is open to negotiation based on Offerors proposal.**
143. Regarding Attachment C, Item 11 (Audits): Is having a completed SOC report (SSAE16) a requirement for this work (as opposed to other third party independent assessments)? If yes, could this be negotiated depending upon the categories we are bidding on in Section XI.1.a, Items i – v of the RFP? **Answer: This is a requirement, and Mason is open to negotiation based on Offerors proposal.**