

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS NO. 1**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

**PROJECT NO. RFP 15-20**

PROJECT TITLE: HCC Information Technology Assessment and Related Services

Date: July 22, 2015

To: Prospective Respondents

From: Procurement Operations Department, Houston Community College

Subject: Questions and Answers Request for Proposals, HCC **Project No. RFP 15-20**

---

1. In the 4<sup>th</sup> paragraph of Section 16, Small Business Development Program (SBDP) the RFP indicates multiple certifications that are recognized but Service Disabled, Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB) are not. We are certified with the SBA as SDVOSB. Would that be a certification that HCC will accept (approve for participation)?

**Answer: It is recommended that respondents provide any information respondents believe the evaluation committee may review and consider.**

2. Section 1.2 cites an anticipated contract term of 3 years with possible two, two year extensions. However section 5.1 calls for pricing for a resulting agreement for a 3 month period. What is the expected length for the period of performance under the awarded contact?

**Answer: Reference Addendum 1.**

3. Does HCC desire onsite full time staffing for the consultants?
  - 3.1 If yes, will HCC provide a fulltime onsite workspace for consulting staff?

**Answer: The vendor is required to address the needs of the RFP and determine what areas require onsite staffing. Based on the scope, onsite staff will be necessary to do but not limited to interviews and discuss the documentation provided by HCC and vice versa. An onsite workspace will provided for these onsite needs.**

- 3.2 If no, are periodic campus visits by consultants with remote meetings acceptable to HCC?

**Answer: Remote online meetings for some of the deliverables such as 6.3 are OK.**

4. Does HCC want information requested section 2.5.I "Business Relationship Strength" incorporated throughout the proposal or in a separate tab 7?

**Answer: Business Relations and Strength should be placed under "Tab 7".**

5. Does HCC want information requested in section 2.5.J "Firm Financial Status" incorporated in the

price proposal under Tab 5 or in separate tab 8?

**Answer:** Firm's Financial Status should be placed under "Tab 7".

6. Should the Price Proposal Worksheet (on page 25-26) be included in the price proposal under Tab 5 or included with the other signed attachments?

**Answer:** Yes, Tab 5.

7. Under Tab 6 (pg. 17), Requirement 5, does HCC want a list of firms vendors have partnered with who are small business certified or does HCC want a list of clients the vendor served who are small business?

**Answer:** A list of clients where you performed work that was subject to or who had a small business program or similar program.

8. If our firm qualifies as a small business under SBA Small Business Size standards, does that fulfill the small business requirement?

**Answer:** SBA certification as a small business under Small Business Administration 8(a) is a certification recognized by HCC. Follow this link: [Small Business Development Program](#)

9. Section 4.2 states in part, "The focus of the resulting engagement is to evaluate and assess the existing District and College IT environments." Please define District in this context.

**Answer:** The HCC district consists of 6 colleges. The district/administrative offices are housed at 3100 Main. Information Technology is housed in the district offices. The 6 College Education Technology departments are located at the colleges. The Instructional TLR and DE departments are located at the District offices. See answer to questions 12.

10. Section 5 refers frequently to district, both capitalized and non-capitalized. Is there a distinction being drawn, and if so, what is the distinction?

**Answer:** Section 5 has no references to capitalized or non-capitalized. This was discussed in the pre-proposal meeting in reference to onsite vs. cloud (aaS) opportunities. The distinction is that capitalized budget items are servers and equipment that HCC would be required to put on depreciation and replacement plans as opposed to non-capitalized budget items which would be annual costs that would be part of the annual operating budget and not subject to depreciation and replacement planning.

11. Section 5.2 refers to "the diversity of the District and Colleges." What do you mean by "diversity" in this context?

**Answer:** Diversity of the District and Colleges refers to the inter-relationships and differences between the technology and operations performed at the District (3100 Main) offices and those performed at the colleges. As discussed in the pre-proposal meeting, the colleges and IT operate separately as distinct entities serving different but, in some ways, similar groups of users. The Colleges serve onsite Campuses instructional services, District Information Technology is focused on administrative services and District Instructional Technology (TLR, DE) is focused on district wide instructional services. The operational differences and the services offered by these departments

represent the diversity.

12. Section 5.5 states “Conduct an administrative and instructional budget resource review based on institutional needs.” Section 5.6.1 states “District wide instructional and administrative technology organizational structure.” However, Section 4.3 (Information Technology Department Overview), makes no explicit mention of instructional or academic technology.

- a) Please provide a brief description of HCC instructional technology and the units that provide it, including those referred to in section 5.15 as TLR, DE, College Education Technology.

Answer:

1. The Teaching and Learning Resources department is responsible for the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE). The CTLE website is at <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/division-of-instructional-services/center-for-teaching-and-learning-excellence/>.
2. The Distance Education department information is at this link: <http://de.hccs.edu/>.
3. The College Education Technology departments are at each college and report to the Presidents. Some Colleges have sites and others do not.
  - a. Central College: <http://central.hccs.edu/about-us/educational-technology/>
  - b. Northeast College: <http://northeast.hccs.edu/about-us/instructional-technology/>
  - c. Northwest College: <http://northwest.hccs.edu/about-us/technology/>
  - d. Southeast College: <http://southeast.hccs.edu/about-us/college-educational-technology-services/>
  - e. Southwest College: <http://southwest.hccs.edu/about-us/educational-technology-services/>
  - f. Coleman College (information embedded in About Us page): <http://coleman.hccs.edu/about-us/>

I would also point you to section 5.4 which requires an assessment of the above departments and their services.

- b) Is this a review of administrative and instructional *technology* budgets for:
- The College and District in total, including income and expenses outside of identified IT departments, for example, in College and District computer science (teaching) departments.
  - The College and District IT departments only
  - HCC’s IT departments

Answer: College Education Technology and District Information and Instructional Technology departments only

13. Section 7.1.2 asks the consultant to “Provide a schedule for weekly project and monthly leadership meetings to discuss progress and any unique issues that may have surfaced.” With whom will the consultant be meeting in the weekly project meetings? If with the HCC team for the project, please provide a description of the team and its membership.

Answer: The meetings will be with the Vice Chancellor of Information Technology and selected HCC leadership. The membership of the project leadership team has yet to be formed but will be

selected from the Director level and above.

14. Section 7.1.4 refers to “the leadership team,” please provide a description of the team and its membership.

Answer: The HCC Leadership Team/Chancellor’s Cabinet consists of the Chancellor, Vice Chancellors of Finance, Instructional Services and Student Services and General Counsel. The leadership team may decide to include College Presidents, Chief HR Officer, Chief Facilities Officer and others but that has not been determined at this point.

15. Section 8.1 states “The assessment completion date shall be within three months from HCC issued Notice to Proceed.” Is there any leeway in this timeline to allow for a more interactive and iterative process?

Answer: This is part of the RFP requirement and will remain a fixed length contract.

16. Has the University established a budget for this consulting project and, if so, can you share that figure with us? (This helps us fine-tune our services to best meet your available funding and expectations.)

Answer: The purpose of an RFP is to determine best value for the college based on each vendors bid. A budget has not been established.

17. Are there specific deadlines, milestones, or activities (budget cycles, board meetings, funding issues, etc.) of which we should be aware that might drive the schedule for the project?

Answer: HCC is looking to each vendor to submit a bid that provides best value to the college. There are no restrictions or extenuating activities driving the project.

18. Will all firms receive copies of questions and answers submitted by all potential bidders?

Answer: Yes. All Addenda, as well as, Questions and Answers are posted on HCC’s and ESBD websites.

19. During the Pre-Bid meeting, it was mentioned that HCC is using SharePoint; does the IT group currently manage unstructured data or content? If so, will assessing the content management system and practices in place fall within the scope of this engagement?

Answer: As stated in the pre-proposal meeting, HCC IT is moving a number of our services to the cloud. HCC’s Intranet (myHCC) and departmental SharePoint sites are in process of being redesigned, restructured and moved to the cloud. Section 5.8 and 5.13 provide the vendor with guidance as HCC is looking for opportunities that will create efficiencies and improve services.

20. Is it in scope to assess all the business units of HCC to address business services provided by IT? If so, can these groups be readily available for data gathering activities?

Answer: The RFP is to assess the technology services provided by IT to the District. In order to evaluate these services, interviews should include non-IT departments that are consuming these services.

21. The RFP does not instruct where the Section 5. Price Proposal form should be placed in the proposer response. Can you please clarify where this form should be placed in the response?

Answer: Price Proposal Form should be placed in Tab 5.

22. Will HCC IT identify HCC staff and students to participate, including sending communications or will services firm be responsible for communicating and scheduling interviews?

Answer: HCC IT will assist the vendor in identifying and introducing the need to the HCC staff and students who participate in the assessment. The vendor will be responsible for communicating and scheduling interviews.

23. Will a non-draft version of exhibit 1 - consulting services agreement be provided?

Answer: Yes

24. Are bidders expected to provide acceptance or redline exhibit 1?

Answer: Acceptance, however, reference page 4, paragraphs 9, 10 and 11.

25. Pricing section - RFP asked for a firm fixed price, including expenses but also asked for hours and hourly rate. Is HCC expectation that travel expenses are billed as part of the invoice, but within the total fixed price or should the hourly rates included all expenses?

Answer: Total Cost must be inclusive of All cost, fees, etc. Complete Price Proposal Form in its entirety. You may supplement the form if additional pages are needed. See G. Tab 5, Price/Cost Schedules, Billing Rate.

26. Will HCC provide a complete HCC org chart that includes the IT groups that sit within the 26 different campuses and or colleges?

Answer: The best that can be provided at this time is addressed in question 12.

27. Will HCC provide an org structure for the Educational Technology organization that is to be assessed, including total head count and a brief summary of each depts. function?

Answer: The best that can be provided at this time is addressed in question 12.

28. Are all of the existing technical support business processes and service delivery practices documented? If so, can samples be provided to illustrate the level of detail contained in the documentation?

Answer: A business process review of ERP process was conducted at part of the previous engagement (see question 64). This information will be provided to the vendor awarded the bid.

29. What is HCC IT role, responsibility and expected participation in the engagement, including number of staff involved?

Answer: As stated in 6.5, the consultant/vendor will "report and work directly with the Vice Chancellor of IT." IT will be available throughout the engagement to provide information and

documentation as needed.

30. Does HCC IT have an EA reference model available and will HCC make it available during the bid process?

Answer: HCC IT has components of an Enterprise Architecture Model such as network architecture diagrams, responsibility charts, process flow diagrams and business process diagrams. This will be provided to the vendor awarded the bid.

31. Will HCC provide a total count of applications and systems that are included in the scope of the RFP, please include general classifications ERP, Education, Cloud, Network, etc.

Answer: HCC IT Contracts manages 115 application and hardware maintenance contracts for both administrative and instructional technology ranging in prices from \$400 to \$1.5m. The list will be provided to the vendor awarded the bid.

32. Who can I speak with regarding the Small Business Development Program and the Good Faith Effort requirements?

Answer: Reference HCC's SBDP to obtain general information about the program and requirements. Follow this link: [Small Business Development Program](#)

33. Do you have a list of qualified vendors/ small businesses?

Answer: No.

34. What are the primary motivations/drivers for conducting the assessment? What are the major concerns or opportunities?

Answer: As stated in the pre-proposal, it has been 10 years since the last IT assessment was done. It is time to reassess to make sure that culture is not overriding opportunity. As stated in the RFP in sections 5.1 through 5.15, HCC is looking for an outside review to surface concerns and bring forward opportunities.

35. What is driving the 3 month project completion time line (duration, end of year timing)?

Answer: The College has determined that 3 month is a sufficient time to complete this engagement.

36. Who is the Executive Sponsor of this RFP?

Answer: Vice Chancellor of Information Technology

37. Who is the audience of the final report and how will the results be reviewed/utilized? Assuming a year-end project completion, what is the expected timeline start for implementation of recommendations?

Answer: The start date for the engagement will be in September or October. The implementation of any recommendations will begin after a full review of and discussion by HCC's leadership team.

38. Will HCC be providing a project manager, and if so what area of the organization is providing

project management? Or, based on Section 6.5, is the Vice Chancellor of Information Technology acting in this role?

Answer: The Vice Chancellor of IT is the Executive Sponsor. The success bidder must provide the resources to coordinate project management with the Executive Sponsor.

39. Is there an HCC Organizational Chart that describes the colleges and districts in more detail than the Fact Book?

Answer:

- District Information: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/about-us/>
- College information: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/about-us/campuslocator/>

40. Section 5.5 of RFP states “Conduct an administrative and instructional budget resource review based on institutional needs.” It was stated in the Pre-Bid Meeting that this refers to the Information Technology Budget, only. We are confirming our understanding of this. Or, are there other institutional budgets to review (e.g. Instructional Technology, CIC)?

Answer: The Information Technology budget is the same as the Administrative budget. The Instruction Technology budgets consist of individual budgets for 6 College Education Technology departments, Teaching and Learning Resources (TLR) and Distance Education (DE).

41. Is there a more detailed IT Organizational Chart – at least headcount by department and location? Are there separate IT organization charts/descriptions that reside in the colleges/districts that are not part of the central IT organization? If so, can you provide those charts as well?

Answer:

- Question 1: See chart at end Appendix 1 (Also, IT has 103 staff not 127 as stated in the pre-proposal meeting. Over the last 8 years, IT has lost, transferred or eliminated 20+ positions).
- Question 2-3: See answer to 12 above

42. Is there an organizational chart that describes in more detail the Instructional Technology Organization referenced in Section 5.15 (i.e. TLR, DE, College Education Technology)? We are confirming that this is a separate organizational structure than IT (as described on page 22). If it is separate from IT, how does it currently work with IT? Does it report up to a different part of the organization than IT? Is HCC considering consolidating these functions into one?

Answer:

- Question 1: See answer to 12 above
- Question 2: District IT controls all technology up to the wall plate. 4 of the 6 Colleges still have data centers which are administered and supported by the College Education Technology departments. 2 Colleges have moved their servers to IT for administration as a best practice. Also, IT manages the district wide replacement plan which includes all PC, network printers, projectors, scanners, network equipment and security equipment as well as the Technology contacts budget which includes 90% of district’s technology hardware and software contracts. Replacements and renewals are coordinated with College Education Technology departments and various other departments annually.
- Question 3: The College Education Technology departments do not report to District IT. See answer to 12 above for more details.

- Questions 4: See section 5.4 of RFP.

43. Is there an IT distributed systems chart that provides a high level description of architectures and resources in addition to Central?

Answer: The IT Distributed Systems charts show Telecom, Network and Data Center systems.

44. Is the IT Strategic Plan available?

Answer: The IT Strategic Plan will be made available to the successful bidder.

45. Can you describe the services provided by external consultants, at least at a high level?

Answer:

- Applications Development department uses external consultants to supplement staff needs when positions are hard to fill and during implementations/upgrades for HCC's ERP, SharePoint, DBA and other third party software.
- Systems support uses consultants for implementations and knowledge transfer in specialty areas such as identity management and security.
- Other IT departments use consultants to supplement staff or for training.

46. Can we have temporary access to the internal web site (non-academic) for purposes of bid response research only? We can provide any necessary confidentiality agreements.

Answer: No

47. Are there any current IT assessments or surveys or other related published data?

Answer: Yes. The information will be provided to the vendor to whom the bid is awarded.

48. Can you provide list current IT initiatives approved and/or underway?

Answer: Part of the purpose of the assessment is to review current initiatives. Initiatives for FY15 and FY 16 include but are not limited to:

- ERP Finance systems upgrade (PeopleSoft, Hyperion)
- MS 365
- SharePoint cloud services
- Security surveillance system replacement/upgrade
- Access control system replacement/upgrade
- Data warehouse implementation
- Learning and student analytics review and implementation
- Wireless AP upgrade

49. Can you provide a high level voice, data, video network topology across the various campuses and districts?

Answer: Yes. The information will be provided to the vendor to whom the bid is awarded.

50. Are AV/video/classroom support services parts of the IT organization or is this provided by



Instructional Technology?

Answer: This function is provided by the College Education Technology departments. See links in question 12.

51. Are there any current institutional advancement campaigns or plans to support new technologies?

Answer: The outcome of this engagement will help the District decide and determine what technologies to implement and support in the future.

52. In order to help HHC succeed in achieving your goals for this project, will you consider extending the period of performance beyond three months?

Answer: No

53. Can you please provide the budget allocated for this initiative?

Answer: See answer to 16

54. In the Instructions for Proposers, Tab 1 provides requirements for Qualifications & Experience of the Firm. But Tab 4 also indicates requirements for Past Performance and References. Much of this is duplicated in each set of instructions. Please clarify. Do you want the information repeated in different sections?

Answer: Information should be provided in response to each required section.

55. What is the anticipated project start date?

Answer: Once the RFP is awarded, the college will work with the successful proposer to determine the start date that works best for HCC.

56. Will you extend the proposal due date from 30 July to 13 August? Extending the due date will allow respondents to provide the best possible response to meet all requirements outlined in the bid document?

Answer: No. See answer to question 15.

57. Would HCC consider responses to portions of the RFP, instead of the entire scope?

Answer: No

58. Who is the Executive Sponsor(s) of this project?

Answer: Vice Chancellor of Information Technology

59. Will the College provide the selected consultant with a project liaison or coordinator to assist with the coordination, scheduling, and communications of this project?

Answer: The Vice Chancellor of IT is the Executive Sponsor. The success bidder must provide the resources to coordinate project management with the Executive Sponsor.

60. Will the College be willing to provide advance materials (including budget information), transmitted securely, to allow the successful consultant to review documentation and make preparations prior to conducting work on-site at HCC?

Answer: HCC IT will provide this information to the vendor awarded the bid.

61. In addition to the 127 employees included in the 6 departments of Central IT identified in the RFP, are there additional IT staff housed in other areas of the College? If yes, how many and are these distributed IT staff part of this assessment?

Answer:

- Question 1: Correction...IT has 103 employees. All employees are housed at the District Offices at 3100 Main St.
- Question 2: No distributed IT Staff. The assessment does include the College Education Technology department located at the colleges. See question 12.

62. We would like to request clarification regarding what level of IT strategic planning, if any, should be included in this engagement. We understand that HCC has a rolling three-year IT Strategic Plan. HCC is currently requesting an IT Assessment and our understanding is that some of the deliverables should establish a five to ten year vision for IT. Can the College clarify its needs and expectations for an IT Assessment versus a Strategic Plan, including the five to ten year vision mentioned for deliverables?

Answer:

- The rolling 3-year IT strategic plan was based on a 10-year IT Road Map that was developed in 2005. This will be provided to the vendor awarded the bid.
- The IT assessment requested in this RFP will provide guidance and input for the development of rolling three year IT strategic plans for the next ten years.

63. Does the College expect the IT Assessment to cover the entire institution (including Athletics, Advancement, etc.)?

Answer: Interviews of departments that consume IT services should be included in the assessment. See question 22.

64. Regarding the previous IT Assessment that was conducted 10 years ago:

a. What firm conducted this work?

Answer: See <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/procurement/rfps/bid-title-178699-en.html>

b. What was the dollar value of the contract?

Answer: See <http://www.hccs.edu/district/departments/procurement/rfps/bid-title-178699-en.html>

c. Are those results of the previous IT Assessment to be shared with the consultant(s) selected to conduct this project?

Answer: The results will be shared with the vendor awarded the bid.

65. Does the College currently subscribe to a benchmarking service, such as Gartner?

Answer: HCC expects the selected vendor to benchmark using systems available to them. HCC does not subscribe to Gartner.

66. Can two or more prime contractors propose the same SBE firm? Or must a SBE firm partner with only one prime contractor?

Answer: HCC does not determine the business arrangements between vendors, subcontractors and third parties.

67. Can the College provide bidders with a list of its colleges and campus locations? I am reviewing the website, but am not coming up with the same numbers quoted during the pre-proposal conference.

Answer: There are 6 colleges. The number of locations was as estimate. Here is a link for an accurate count: <http://www.hccs.edu/district/about-us/campuslocator/>.

68. How many of HCC's campus locations will the selected consultant need to visit as part of this project?

Answer: The selected vendor will need to visit each college (6) and various locations for interviews. The number will need to be determined by the selected vendor based on industry best practice for interviews, surveys, focus groups, etc.

69. Regarding RFP Section 1.8 (page 5 of the RFP): The RFP states "Proposer must acknowledge receipt of all addenda in Attachment No. 1 of this RFP (Proposal/Contract Award Form)."

Answer: We are not sure of the question you are asking. However, signing and submitting Attachment 1, Proposal/Contract Award Form certifies that you have received all addenda.

70. Can the College clarify how/where we acknowledge receipt of addenda on this form? It is not clear to me from my review of Attachment 1 on page 27 of the RFP. Please advise.

Answer: Signing and submitting Attachment 1, Proposal/Contract Award Form certifies that you have received all addenda.

71. Regarding RFP Section 1.12 (page 6 of the RFP): The RFP states "A properly completed vendor application is required and is a condition of contract award."

- a. Is this vendor application in reference to RFP Section 1.11? Or is HCC referring to a different application and if so, can HCC provide the form to bidders and/or provide instructions as to where we may find it online?

Answer: See page 3, section 1, General Information, paragraph regarding visiting HCC Procurement Operations Website and registering as a vendor.

- b. Does the vendor application need to be returned as part of our proposal response?

Answer: No. It is an online application.

72. Regarding RFP Section 2.4.F.11 (RFP page 16): How many letters of recommendation are required?

Answer: HCC does not require a set amount as your letters of recommendation are based on your relevant past performance. A reasonable number is suggested so as to give the evaluation committee a comfortable grasp of the level and quality of the services your firm provided during previous engagements.

73. For the response to Tab 5 – Price/Cost Schedules, Billing Rates is it acceptable to respond with a fix price without breaking down the pricing to specific rates for the individuals involved with the project?

Answer: No. The requirement is for both a fix price and individual pricing and the form must be completed in its entirety.

74. Will the cost portion of the proposal be indecently assessed from the remainder of the proposal?

Answer: We do not understand this question.

Appendix 1: IT Org Chart with staff counts

