

Request for Proposals (RFP) Addendum #1

SWIFT Event: 2000010115

Addendum Number: 01

Date of Addendum: 10/4/2019

Title: NASPO RFP for IT Research and Advisory Services

SCOPE OF ADDENDUM

The following are changes to the RFP: (1) Posting vendor questions to the RFP and the State's answers.

Vendor questions to the RFP and State's answers are as follows:

1. Is this a new NASPO contract portfolio?
[Yes.](#)
2. Is there an anticipated start date for the resulting contracts?
[At this time, the Anticipated Start Date for the resulting contracts is February 3, 2020](#)
3. Does the State of Minnesota expect to provide an on-ramp period during the life of the contract, to solicit and qualify additional contractors to be added to the master agreement?
[No.](#)
4. Can the State confirm how many of the highest-scoring responders from Step 2 will be invited to Step 3?
[There is not a pre-determined number of responders who will be invited to Step 3.](#)
 - a. If there is no fixed number at this time, how will this number be determined?
[Responders will be invited to Step 3 based on the natural break of evaluation scores.](#)
5. Does the State have an estimated timeline for when interviews might be scheduled?
[Interviews/Demonstrations are tentatively schedule for the second week of January, 2020.](#)
6. During the pre-proposal conference, it was indicated that information from Part 1 of submitted Cost Proposals would be incorporated into the resulting contract. Can the State confirm that this is the case, and if so, define what level of detail from submitted Cost Proposals will be incorporated?
[Responses to Part 1, detailing responders services offerings, descriptions, and costs will be incorporated into the resulting master contract\(s\). Do not include extraneous information you do not want included in a resulting contract.](#)
7. Page 4 of Attachment A indicates that NASPO ValuePoint will not be a party to the Master Agreement. If this is that case, can the State confirm which documents will constitute the final "NASPO ValuePoint Master Agreement Terms & Conditions" which is listed as item no. 2 under Attachment A, Section 1. "Master Agreement Order of Precedence"?

Attachment A includes the NASPO ValuePoint's Master Agreement terms and conditions and shall be included in any master agreements awarded by the State of Minnesota under this RFP. NASPO ValuePoint is not a party to any master agreement awarded under this RFP. The Order of Precedence in Section 1 of Attachment A is used by the lead state to resolve any conflicts between the terms and conditions in any master agreement awarded under this RFP.

- a. Will these include the Attachment C terms, the Attachment A terms, or both?
All attachments listed in the RFP will be included in any master agreement resulting from the award of this RFP. In the Order of Precedence, NASPO ValuePoint Master Agreement Terms and Conditions (Attachment A) is second only to the Participating Entity's Participating Addendum. Attachment C is as a part of the Solicitation and is fifth in the Order of Precedence.

8. In reference to Mandatory Requirement 1.1, the RFP requires an online database containing research articles of at least 1,000 articles published within the last five (5) years. Will NASPO please confirm that these articles do not include tweets, blogs or social media posts?

Blogs may count towards a responders article count if they are supported by objective Information Technology research and identify the sponsor (if any) of the research.

- a. Additionally, to ensure that respondents meet the requirement, does NASPO require vendors to provide the amount of original research (excluding tweets, blogs and social media posts) they have published for each year of the past five years?

Responders are required to submit a response detailing how they meet the requirement of at least 1,000 articles published within the last five (5) years.

In reference to Section 3.1.3, the advertisements, sponsorship or endorsements of technology products and services from IT vendors is a weighted part of the 35 point-based technical evaluation for Responders. When research is "sponsored" it is commissioned by a technology provider or IT vendor that paid a research provider to publish research insights on its behalf. This type of paid research compromises the research provider's objectivity and could introduce risk to the Contract's users if their technology decisions are based on biased, inorganic insights. Since "sponsored" research conflicts with NASPO's stated requirements for independent, objective and unbiased research, and because the Technical Submission is evaluated on a points basis, will a Vendor be disqualified if they have published any "sponsored" research articles?

No.

- b. If not, then will the evaluators deduct significant points for Respondents publishing research on a "sponsored" basis?

Evaluation by its nature is subjective. Each Evaluator will score the responses independently.

- c. Does NASPO require respondents to state if they produce research on a sponsored or endorsed basis?

Responder's should address sponsorships/endorsements in response to Sections 3.1.2, 3.1.3, and 3.1.4.

9. In reference to Section 5.b, the RFP requires Responders to complete and submit a "Conflicts of Interest Form". Will NASPO please clarify where we can find this form?

There is not a conflicts of interest form. Please follow the instructions in the RFP and provide a list of all entities which it has relationships that create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest with the work that is contemplated in this RFP. The list should indicate the name of the entity, the relationship, and a discussion of the conflict.

- a. In reference to the aforementioned "Conflict of Interest Form", the RFP requires Respondents to list out all entities or parties that might contribute to any conflicts of interest. If a Respondent has published any white papers that have been "sponsored" by IT vendors, does NASPO require that these IT vendors also be identified and discussed in this form, as this presents a conflict of interest?

So long as each article indicates that it was sponsored, and by whom, responders are not required to list those entities in their Conflict of Interest statement.

- b. Shall Vendors list all of the "sponsored" research published, to clearly identify which articles have an inherent conflict of interest?

Responders should list the entities that have sponsored their research articles within their Conflict of Interest statement if the articles themselves do not indicate that they are sponsored and by whom.

10. In reference to Section 3.2.7, are the minimum qualifications and experience requirements for analysts expected to be demonstrated by providing representative resumes of analysts and advisory staff for each of the primary topic areas identified in 2.1.5?

No.

- a. Will NASPO accept resumes and biographies in an Appendix that does not count toward the 50-page limit?

This RFP does not ask for resumes as a part of the response. Documents submitted beyond the 50 page limit may not be considered during evaluation.

11. In reference to Attachment A, Section 7.a, the link provided by NASPO is not working. Will NASPO please provide a link to a working Reporting Tool?

An updated link has been provided in Addendum #2.

This addendum shall become part of the RFP and should be returned with, or acknowledged in, the response to the RFP.

RESPONDER NAME:

SIGNATURE:

TITLE:

DATE: