DATE: June 10, 2021

TO: All Potential Vendors

FROM: Jessica Smith, RFP Coordinator

SUBJECT: Amendment #1 to A21-RFP-018 External Independent Quality Assurance (QA) Services for Future Projects

**Summary:**

This document is prepared by the Washington State Consolidated Technology Services (CTS) and shall serve as the sole official reply to Vendor Questions submitted in response to RFP A21-RFP-018.

Questions and responses are numbered for ease of reference only and are in no particular order or priority. Questions and comments have generally been stated as they were received except that some questions have been modified to maintain vendor confidentiality or to reduce redundancies. The answers may only explain or clarify some aspect that is already addressed in the RFP. Some of the answers may also supplement or change what was previously stated in the RFP or in an appendix. It is important that Vendors review all questions and answers. Vendors are advised to obtain and thoroughly review the complete, formal RFP located at: <http://watech.wa.gov/procurement-announcements>. In the revised RFQQ, if applicable, deleted text appears ~~struck through in black font~~, while added text appears underlined in red font.

**SECTION 2**

**DATE & TIME EVENT**

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| June 2, 2021 | RFP Issued |
| June 9, 2021 | Final Vendor Questions and Comments due by 12 NOON  |
| June 10, 2021 | State’s Final Written Answers issued |
| ~~June 16, 2021~~ | ~~Responses due by 12 NOON~~  |
| ~~June 17-24, 2021~~ | ~~Evaluation period begins~~ |
| ~~June 28-30, 2021~~ | ~~Top finalists interviews and reference check (optional)~~ |
| ~~July 8, 2021~~ | ~~Announcement of ASV~~ |
| ~~July 10, 2021~~ | ~~Vendor Request for Optional Debriefing due by 5pm~~ |
| ~~July 14, 2021~~ | ~~Optional Vendor Debriefings~~ |
| ~~July 31, 2021~~ | ~~Contract available for work to begin~~ |
| **DATE & TIME**June 2, 2021 | **EVENT**RFP Issued |
| June 9, 2021 | Final Vendor Questions and Comments due by 12 NOON  |
| June 10, 2021 | State’s Final Written Answers issued |
| June 23, 2021 | Responses due by 12 NOON  |
| June 24-, July 12021 | Evaluation period begins |
| July 7 & 8 2021 | Top finalists interviews and reference check (optional) |
| July 15, 2021 | Announcement of ASV |
| July 19, 2021 | Vendor Request for Optional Debriefing due by 5pm |
| July 21, 2021 | Optional Vendor Debriefings |
| July 31, 2021 | Contract available for work to begin |

**V****endor Questions and Official Answers**

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| **#** | **Question** | **CTS Response** |
| 1 | Will CTS consider extending the submission deadline by 1 week, i.e., to June 23rd at 12pm PST?  | *See revised schedule above.* |
| 2 | In Appendix E, Section B (Statement of Work Deliverables), does the total not to exceed hours assume for each deliverable *per* project, or for the duration of the contract (i.e., multiple projects)? | *The total not to exceed hours is per deliverable, per project. Each project would have it’s own discrete SOW and set of deliverables?*  |
| 3 | Section 1- Introduction 1.1 Acquisition Authority - Can the State confirm that it intends to award multiple contracts with this solicitation? | *Yes.* |
| 4 | Section 1- Introduction 1.1 Acquisition Authority - Are there existing QA vendors allowed to participate in this procurement? | *Please refer back to Section 4.6 (M) Conflict of Interest in the RFP.* |
| 5 | (M) Conflict of Interest - Is the State expecting vendor responses in Section 4.6 (M) Conflict of Interest to include a statement that confirms and understands the requirement regarding Conflict of Interest? | *Please refer back to Section 4.6 (M) Conflict of Interest in the RFP.* |
| 6 | Appendix E - Section B (MS 35) Statement of Work Deliverables - Without a project specified for QA services, can the State provide guidance regarding how it would like responses to address items 1 – 3 in the Task/Deliverables table of Appendix E, Section B where the complexity of the project and its expected duration can affect the number of hours and total not to exceed costs? |  *Refer to the OCIO QA policy 132,* [*Project Quality Assurance*](https://ocio.wa.gov/policy/project-quality-assurance)*.* |
| 7 | Appendix B includes a reference to “FirstRule Group”, is that reference intended to be illustrative? | *The URL shown in Appendix B, points to the procurement section of the WaTech website*[*https://watech.wa.gov/procurement-announcements*](https://watech.wa.gov/procurement-announcements) *.*  |
| 8 | (MS 10) Client References - states that there will be one (1) attempt to contact the client and obtain a reference. Can we provide more than three (3) references? | *You may if you like but we will only be contacting three (3) references?* |
| 9 | Appendix C states - In accordance with WAC 326-30-046, CTS goals for acquisitions have been established as follows: 12% MBE or WBE. Section 3 3.15 states - No minimum level of MWBE participation is required as a condition of receiving an award and no preference will be included in the evaluation of Responses in accordance with chapter 39 RCW. | *Yes, both of these statements are true.* *The first one communicates the goals of the agency for MBE or WBE vendors. The second statement says the vendor does not have to be a MBE or WBE to respond to the bid.*  |
| 10 | Can you please confirm the MBE/WBE requirements? | *Section 3, clause 3.15 –* *CTS strongly encourages participation of minority and women businesses. Vendors who are MWBE certified or intend on using MWBE certified Subcontractors are encouraged to identify the participating firm on Appendix C. No minimum level of MWBE participation is required as a condition of receiving an award and no preference will be included in the evaluation of Responses in accordance with chapter 39 RCW. For questions regarding the above, contact Office of MWBE at (360) 753-9693* |
| 11 | What is the anticipated usage of this contract in terms of the number of projects annually that will require these services? | *There are three projects identified in the CTS budget for the 2021-2023 biennium which will require independent quality assurance. All numbers are subject to change.* |
| 12 | Will state agency projects that the WaTech IT Consultant team is overseeing be eligible for QA services? | *Refer back to Section 1.2 Scope of Services to Be Provided of RFP.* |
| 13 | How will the DES IT Professional Services statewide contract that includes Quality Assurance services be used in conjunction with the contracts awarded as a result of this RFP? | *These project’s are for the Enterprise Project Office (EPO), within WaTech.* |
| 14 | According to the definition of QA, these services are focused exclusively on project management plans and project risks. Could WaTech please confirm that solution assessment, IV&V, and testing services will be procured through another contract? | *This procurement is for QA services as it relates to OCIO Policy 132,* [*Project Quality Assurance*](https://ocio.wa.gov/policy/project-quality-assurance)*.* |
| 15 | WaTech anticipates responding to questions on Thursday 6/9. The answers to our questions significantly affect our decision to propose, and the team we would propose. We would only have 3 business days to prepare a proposal that would typically take 3-4 weeks to prepare given the current volume of RFPs generated by states. May we request an extension of the proposal deadline to June 30th? | *Please see Section 2 above.* |
| 16 | The minimum requirements are for “The designated lead QA vendor(s)”. Do these requirements apply to the lead personnel for the vendor, or the vendor itself? | *Refer to Section 5, article 5.6, Project Team Staffing and Resumes.*  |
| 17 | The RFP states that “personnel must be available to work in the Olympia area”. Does WaTech expect the vendor to have staff located in Olympia or just able to be present for scheduled on-site meetings? Please clarify the expectations for on-site work as much as possible. | *WaTech requires the vendor is able to travel to Olympia to participate in on-site meetings where the vendor’s physical presence is required.*  |
| 18 | The Vendor must commit the proposed personnel to perform QA services during the Work Period of Performance, but there is no timeframe specified at this time. Is WaTech willing to accept resumes of currently employed consultants who could potentially provide services, with the understanding that not every consultant would be available at the time of the actual project? | *For each project, a statement of work will be agreed to and the SOW includes the following language:****Timeline and Period of Performance****The period of performance for this project will start on [start date] and the work tasks are estimated to continue through [end date]. Purchaser has the right to extend or terminate this SOW at its sole discretion.**Refer back to section 5.6 Project Team Staffing and Resumes.*  |
| 19 | Before [vendor] can consider bidding, we have a question regarding a potential conflict of interest. [We] are working for the OCIO as Project Management Partners. In our roles, we support agency projects, including WaTech with project management support and guidance to improve the outcomes of gated funding projects. We’d love to bid on this work, but given our roles thought we should check with you first [Weather it would be a conflict of interest].  | *It is likely a conflict of interest would arise in this case.*  |
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